Perſonal Reprobation Reprobated:

BEING

A Plain EXPOSITION upon the Nineth Chapter to the *Romans*,

SHEWING,

That there is neither little nor much of any ſuch Doctrine as *Perſonal Election or Reprobation*, aſſerted by the Apoſtle in that Chapter:

But that his great Deſigne is to maintain Juſtification by Faith in Chriſt Jeſus, without the Works of the Law.

Humbly Offered to ſerious Conſideration,

By *Samuel Loveday.*

John 3. 17. *For God ſent not his ſon into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be ſaved.*

LONDON,

Printed for the Authour, and to be ſold by him, and *Francis Smith*, at the Elephant and Caſtle, and *P. Parker* at the Leg and Star in *Cornhil*, 1676.

Price Bound, 2 *s.*

1911.116.6
C 1279.29.30*

Licensed,

Nov. 30. 1675.

THE PREFACE TO THE READER.

Reader,

ALthough it is uſual yet not always ſo needful as in this caſe, to uſher in the following matter with a preparatory Introduction to prepare thee to conſider of what is here offered, which is not that which is newly ſprung up in my underſtanding, but that which hath been my ſtedfaſt belief and ſatisfied perſwaſion more then twenty years, as many can witneſſe; and the truth is, thoſe prodigious hardfavoured and frightful notions and Opinions, which I often meet with, both in words and writings, built upon this portion of

Scripture, has preſt me even beyond my genius to appear in this way; for I am deeply ſenſible of my own inabillity in parts and learning to anſwer the expectations of the knowing Criticks of our age, neither ſhall make that my aim in my proceedings: that which I deſigne in this Treatiſe is in a very plain and familiar way to offer my Opinion and underſtanding to the unbia'ſt Reader upon this portion of Scripture, as my underſtanding has been rectified by the current of other Scriptures, and the judgements of many approved and very learned men both antient and modern which I have conſulted with: and although my genius has not at any time inclined me to imbroyl my ſelf in controverſies publique or private, but hath given my ſelf to the ſtudy of thoſe more immediatly neceſſary doctrines in Religion, yet I am greatly deſirous (ſo far as God ſhall enable me) to be inſtrumental to make an eſſay, to diſpel thoſe clouds of darkneſſe, that to many, do interpoſe between them and that truth ſhining in this Scripture: and the more willingly do I concern my ſelf in this matter, becauſe I judge the great name and gracious nature of our good God is much diſparaged and obſcured by the more general conſtruction of this portion of Scripture: the common and general receiving Opinion of men upon this place of Scripture (I ſay) doth not comport with that name that God is known by elſewhere in the holy Scriptures, as to be a God *good, gracious, merciful, juſt, equal,* not *puniſhing the guiltleſſe, nor quitting the guilty, but judging every man according to his works*, that *takes no pleaſure in the deſtruction of the wicked*; but is *long-ſuffering* to us ward, not *willing that any ſhould periſh:*

periſh: whereas the common Opinion ſuppoſedly deduced from this Chapter doth render God partiall in his dealings with the ſons of men, whilſt they are in no capacity to act good or evil: I may be bold to ſay, that there is no portion of Scripture in the whole book of God, more wronged, wracked, and tortured, ſubborned, and made to ſpeak what it never meant as this is: This nineth of the *Romans* is made the ſupterfuge of many dreadful amazing notions; as for inſtance.

1. That all things happen not only according to Gods fore knowledge but by his expreſſe decree, that *Eſau* was a wicked man by vertue of Gods poſitive decree of Reprobation, before he was born; that wicked men by ſtrong impulſes from God do that which is unlawful for them to do; that Gods decrees are not leſſe efficacious in his permiſſion of evil, then in the bringing forth of good: ſome have ventured to ſay, that all ſin is of God, as the author; and man as the inſtrument: others affirm, that there are two wills in God, a ſecret and a revealed, and by conſequence the one quite contrary to the other, as to the ſame act, the one decreeing what the other forbids, which to me ſeems a greater piece of abſurdity, then thoſe are guilty of who were of Opinion, that there are two Gods, as the different authors of good and evil: But it is true, there are but few who will be ſo bold, though of the forenamed Opinions in the root, to make ſuch an ingenious application of their own Opinions, as others have done. But (Reader) give me leave to preſent thee with the ſtandard which I deſire to meaſure by, to preſerve me from all thoſe extravagant notions aforeſaid, which I hope may

not be offensive to any to close with upon due consideration: and in order thereunto, know that I desire but two principles to be the square and measure of what I hold on the contrary to the premises.

1. That all sin is of man and not of God; that God doth not tempt, much less force any man to sin.

2. That all good is of God, and not Originally of man, and in both these principles I have the Apostle *James* on my side; *James* 1. *ver.* 13. 17. God is the author of all the good men do and receive: man is the author of all the evil he commits, and of all the evil he suffers for his evil so commited; all the good we do is by strength received from God, not from any good distinctly in himself: grace makes men able to do good, not unable to do evil: God punisheth no man with eternal death under the notion of a creature, but as a malefactor; no man is sinful because he is ordained to condemnation, but ordained to condemnation because he is sinful, *Jude*, 4. if any suppose two wills in God, with respect to mans eternal state, we must; yea it were preposterous to judge of his revealed will by his supposed secret; but we must resolve his secret will into his revealed will, *Dent.* 29. *last.* Thus far we may grant, that Gods antecedent will is, *that all men should be saved*, and his subsequent will, wherein he decrees the death of rebellious rejecters of his grace: I hope it will easily be granted that grace makes men able to choose good, not unable to refuse it: It is a saying of *Tertullian*, *that as God made man in his own image so in nothing more lively then in the freedome*

and

and liberty of his will, otherwise (saith he) *he were neither liable to reward or punishment, being under a necessity.* I am sensible, that I am upon a great disadvantage in what I shall here offer, because the far greater number of zealous Professors are so prepossest with ill will to this doctrine, that they will hardly be willing to reade, much less consider of what is offered of this kinde: the zealous Jews were not more prejudic't against our Saviour then many professors are against this doctrine: but know it is commendable and honourable for persons, to compare what they reade and hear to the Scriptures, as the *Bereans* did, who hereupon rendred themselves more noble then those of *Thessalonica:* Truth is so worthy a jewel, that wise *Solomon* doth counsel us, *to buy it what ever it cost, Pro.* 23. he hath ty'd us to no price in the purchase of it; and this truth now in controversie is of great concernment, rightly to understand the terms of salvation: it is a dangerous thing to be yoked with errour, especially in a matter of such great importance, about Gods decree, with respect to mans eternal state: it is an uncomfortable condition, for persons to live in doubt and question of the reallity of Gods desire of their salvation, in the offers and tenders of his grace: and no opinion doth more naturally and rationally leade persons to spiritual slothfulnesse, to live in a doubt hereof, whether our labour will be successeful in the Lord: I was lately reading a saying of a learned man, respecting the Opinion that I am now opposing, as to the tendency of it; and these are his words in substance, if not *verbatim*: *If the God of this world had a minde or opportunity to petition to the grandees*

or pillers in Religion, met in councel, that they would take ſome pitty on him, and eſtabliſh by law ſome few doctrins, which he ſhould nominate for the relief of his tottering kingdome, this would be the firſt or chief he would nominate, namely, the doctrine of abſolute perſonal and irreſpective Election and Reprobation: which doctrin is directly calculated for the fleſh and old man: for (ſaith that Doctor) *in effect a man may be unjuſt, unmerciful, partial and full of diſſimulation, hating moſt men without cauſe, and yet moſt like God himſef*: Thus ſpeaketh that Author as to the import of this opinion.

But it will appear from the following Expoſition, that our Apoſtle had no affinity with ſuch an Opinion of ſuch *Perſonal Election*, neither was ſuch an opinion any ways properly conducing to the effecting his deſigne upon the unbelieving Jews; who reckoned themſelves the elect of God, and none elſe in all the world; but the whole world beſides were caſt off; and therefore they forbid the Apoſtles *to preach to the gentiles, that they might be ſaved*: whereas the Apoſtles deſigne was, to convince the Jews, that Gods elect were ſuch and ſuch only, who ſhould believe in Jeſus Chriſt, as well gentiles as Jews, there being no reſpect of perſons with God.

The method which I ſhall proceed in, is that which is uſual in Treatiſes of this nature.

1. I firſt enquire into the various readings of the words.

2. Conſult the Original reading with them.

3. Give the ſcope ſence and meaning with an eye to the Context.

4. Lay

4. Lay down those doctrinal conclusions that doth naturally flow from the words.

But I fear I shall hold the Reader too long in the Preface, which to some may be unpleasant, I shall therefore with a few instructions to the Reader, break off, and refer him to the book it self.

1. *I* entreat the Reader, that he would not judge of the matter of this book, according to those many imperfections in the management of it, but according to that truth shining in the scope of the whole; you have here a brief *compendium* of the whole controversial part of the Chapter, wherein you may as in a glasse see the face of the whole at once.

2. Know this, that there was a time when I was pathetically engaged in my judgement on the other hand, till through reading and searching the Scriptures, and reasoning with those differing from me in the matter, the truth did forceably and convincingly shine into my understanding; from whence I am instructed to wait not only with patience, and with charity, but hopes also, as towards those, who now yet do oppose this truth: My own experience instructing me that a person may have a good conscience, though ignorant of truth in many particulars, but no man can have a good conscience who is debauched in morals.

3. Labour to reade and weigh what is here offered without a prejudic't minde; read to understand, not to contradict.

4. This I entreat, that if thou findest some words, phrases, or sayings, often repeated, think it not strange, for thou wilt finde it needful, in order to beating out truth.

I will add no more, but only desire thee, to accept of this my service as ingeniously and candidly as it is honestly intended; for this I can say, I took not in hand this task, because I love to see my self in print, or because I fancy scribling, but with a hearty and fervent desire of being instrumental to do some good; which as it hath been, so shall be the hearty prayer of,

Thy obliged Friend,

to serve the in the truth.

S. L.

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PAge 3. line 29. for *Appstle* reade *Apostle*. p. 6. l. 14. r. *unrighteousnes*. p. 9. l. 20. *dele chiefly*. p. 11. l. 15. r. *his person*. p. 18. l. 20. for *would* r. *could*. p. 18. l. last for *summary* r. *sum up*. p. 20. l. 27. for 33. r. 23. p. 21. l. 14. for *Christs* r. *Christ*. p. 22. l. 23. r. *abdicated*. p. 28. l. 8. r. *was*. p. 305. l. 23. for *nations* r. *notions*.

A Brief *Compendium* of the whole Controverſiall part of this Chapter, as a Preface to the Matter following.

SHewing the concurrence of each paſſage therein to the making up of a ſweet harmony etween this 9th and 3, 4, 10, 11, Chapters of this Epiſtle, and herein I am perſwaded that if the Reader do but lay aſide prejudice, and obſerve narrowly and heed carefully as he go along, he will receive great ſatisfaction in the truth of what is ſpoken from each verſe diſtinctly, by that joint conſent and argument, appearing in the whole, put together: for although it is poſſible to wreſt and miſinterpret ſome ſingle verſes or paſſages in Scripture, yet it is granted on all hands, that he that takes in the whole ſcope of Epiſtle, Chapter, and Contexr, in what he ſpeaks, is in the ready way to make an unerring Conſtruction of matters. This 9th of the *Romans* has been much wronged for want of this obſervation, by Inſiſting upon ſome verſes, without heeding the ſcope of the whole; it was, (to *Solomon*) a ſight of the true mother, which would not have the Child divided: an honeſt Expoſitor will take the ſcope, whether it makes for or againſt him; now if you ſhall ſo obſerve me, and go along with me, I dare to pro-

miſe you ample ſatisfaction, that there is no ſuch Doctrine concluded in this context, as Irreſpective Election, or Reprobation of perſons.

I proceed, it is granted on all hands, even by thoſe zealous on the other hand, that the great deſigne that the Apoſtle carried on in this Epiſtle and Chapter, is to aſſert and maintain juſtification and eternal ſalvation to come in by faith alone, without the works of the law; and that there is an abſolute neceſſity of believing in Jeſus Chriſt, to prevent eternal perdition, both by Jew and gentile: this is poſitively determined, *Cha.* 2. 8. 9. *tribulation and wrath upon all that obey not the truth, upon the Jew firſt, and alſo upon the gentile*: there being no reſpect of perſons with God, the Jews muſt come in at the ſame door with the gentiles.

Now the Apoſtle being deeply ſenſible, that his brethren the Jews lay under the danger of this great ſeverity, as they were Rejecters of Chriſt and the Goſpel, he is cordially concerned for them, as appeareth by his ſolemn proteſtation and aſſeveration, as to the ſorrow of heart that he lay under for them, *vers.* 1. and that which he knew was as a ſtumbling-block in their way as to their believing in Jeſus Chriſt, was their dependance upon their carnal privileges which they were inveſted with, as they were *Abrahams* ſeed according to the fleſh, which priviledges the Apoſtle grants to be theirs, and makes an enumeration of them, *verſes*, 3, 4, 5. but that theſe priviledges were not of ſuch a ſingular and ſaving nature as they thought, he takes pains to ſatisfie them; and moreover whereas they were ready to pleade, that they were not only thus priviledged, but further as they were *Abrahams* ſeed, the Inheritance was theirs, and ſo intailed upon

upon them, that they could not miſcarry, except a failing ſhould be in Gods word of promiſe: to which their ſuppoſed plea the Apoſtle replies, *ver.* 6. not as though the word of God had taken none effect; and as to a further amplification, the Apoſtle in the following *verſes*, takes pains to aſſert and maintain, that they may miſcarry to all eternity, and yet Gods promiſe ſtand firm and true to thoſe to whom it was made, which he doth pathetically demonſtrate, both negatively and affirmatively, to be not *Abrahams* ſeed according to the fleſh but according to faith in Chriſt; the promiſes made to *Abraham*, *I will be thy God and the God of thy ſeed*, did not intend *Abrahams* ſeed according to the fleſh, but according to the faith in Chriſt, which was eminently ſet forth in the miraculous birth of *Iſaac*, which is alſo confirmed in his Epiſtle to the *Galatians*, in plain terms, *chap.* 3. *laſt*, *if ye be Chriſts*, *then are you* Abrahams *ſeed*, *and heirs according to promiſe*, elſe not; it muſt be ſuppoſed; to which conſtruction agreeth, *ver.* 7. *ver.* 8. following; neither becauſe they are the ſeed of *Abraham* are they all Children, but *in* Iſaac *ſhall thy ſeed be called*, or by faith ſhall thy ſeed be called, as *Iſaac* was a childe of faith: this is further amplified, *ver.* 8 *the children of the fleſh are not the children of God but the children of the promiſe are accounted for the ſeed*; which vigorous and pathetical arguing of the Appſtle, doth clearly inſtruct us what was the falſe bottom that the Jews reſted upon, namely, that they could not miſcarry who deſcended of *Abrahams* loins according to the fleſh: 2ly, that God in his promiſe to *Abraham* did not intend his ſeed, meerly according to the fleſh: he proceeds to demonſtrate from matter of fact, be-

cauſe ſome of *Abrahams* ſeed are by God caſt out and diſinherited, namely *Iſhmael*, who by appointment of God was excluded from inheriting with *Iſaac*, though begotten from *Abrahams* own body: and whereas to this inſtance of *Iſhmael* the Jews might be ready to ſay, there might be ſome reaſon given for his rejection on fathers ſide, mothers ſide, and his own, he was born before the covenant of circumciſion; his mother was a Bondwoman, and *Iſhmael* is taken mocking *Iſaac*: the Apoſtle proceeds to give a 2d without exception, even to the inſtance of *Eſau* the natural ſon of *Iſaac*, in whom the promiſes were eſpecially lodged, *In* Iſaac *ſhall thy ſeed be called*: this inſtance is without any or the leaſt exception born in circumciſion, of his free-wife *Rebecca*, and a twinn with *Jacob*, born at the ſame time, and yet in his race rejected the *Edomites*; God fore-ſeeing they would be a wicked perſecuting people, predicts their ſervitude and bondage and excluſion from the land of *Canaan*, to inherit the barren Mountains of *Mount Seir*, which ſhews, that it is not enough to be *Abrahams* ſeed, if they be not of his faith and holyneſs; for ſome of *Abrahams* ſeed by his ſpecial ſon *Iſaac* are rejected and hated for ſin, *Mal.* 1. *Obed.* 10. for his cruelty againſt his brother *Jacob*, ſhame ſhall cover him; ſo that the Apoſtles argument lyeth here, if *Eſau* in his poſterity eminently deſcending from *Abrahams* loins through *Iſaac*, in whom the promiſe was lodged, might be hated, and his mountain deſtroyed; then how can you Jews, though the ſeed of *Abraham*, in a remote ſenſe, claim from that foot of account? eſpecially conſidering that you have perſecuted to death the ſon of God *whom* Abraham *loved and rejoyced to ſee afar off*, ſeeing

ing God is not obliged to any of the ſeed of *Abraham*, but as they are found in Chriſt, who was *Abrahams* right ſeed, as is eminently expreſt, *Gal.* 3. 16. he ſaith not, *to ſeeds*, but *ſeed*, which ſeed is Chriſt; and if the Jews ſhould further pleade, that beſide there deſcent from *Abrahams* loins, they are a people near to God, in covenant, by circumciſion and the Ceremonial law, and thereby diſtinguiſhed from all the nations of the world to be Gods people: the Apoſtle follows them in that alſo, *ver.* 11. *that the purpoſe of God according to election ſhould ſtand, not of works*, that is not of works of that kinde, which was eminently typed out in the excluding *Iſhmael* out of *Abrahams* family, and from the inheritance: for in ſo doing God did alſo exclude the works of the law from juſtification, as we may ſee plainly *Gal.* 4. 22, 23, 24. for *Iſaac* and *Iſhmael* were two lively types of the two Covenants, and that from *Sinai* is rejected as to Juſtification, ſo that neither from their pedigree nor their legall obedience, could they have any ſpecial acceptance with God, for *by the works of the law ſhall no fleſh be juſtified*, and thus it is not of works, *ver.* 11.

Now hereupon the Jews proceeds to raiſe a 2d and new Objection, formed thus, what doth not God Juſtifie according to works (*Paul?*) then by this doctrine of thine thou ſeemeſt to contradict that declared righteous Rule of Gods proceedings, which is to judge and reward every man according to his works: this *Obj.* the Apoſtle ſuppoſeth and replyeth unto, *ver.* 14. *is there unrighteouſneſſe with God? God forbid:* no ſuch thing can be (ſaith he) neither can ſuch a concluſion be drawn from ſuch premiſes, but more particularly the Apoſtle pro-

ceeds, in order to clearing his doctrine from the leaſt imputation of impeaching the righteouſneſſe of God, which he endeavours to do from a double Argument.

1ſt, That Juſtification cannot be of works, becauſe it is of grace and mercy;

2ly, That God cannot be unrighteous, in caſting off the ſeed of *Abraham* according to the fleſh who were ſtrict obſervers of the law of circumciſion, and in their room receive the gentiles, who ſhould believe in Jeſus Chriſt, and obey the Goſpel, becauſe from the beginning he had left himſelf that liberty, and is not obliged to any man; ſo that un= there can be no righteouſneſſe, in doing that which he hath a juſtneſſe of power to do: this which I ſay (ſaith the Apoſtle) is no more then what he hath declared from the beginning, that ſalvation ſhall be of grace, Mercy and Compaſſion, and conſequently not of works; for the Scripture ſaith unto *Moſes*, *Exod.* 33. 19. *I will have Mercy upon whom I will have Mercy*, which words were occaſioned by *Moſes*'s interceding with God for *Iſrael* after that great ſin of theirs; that God would in ſpecial own them for his people above all the people of the world beſides; to which petition God returns this checking anſwer, (ſay no more) *I will have mercy and compaſſion on whom I will*, or upon what ſort of perſon I pleaſe, and will not give thee an account, though thou beeſt my friend *Moſes*: thou ſhalt know I have an unqueſtionable right in this caſe to ſhew my mercy and grace on whom I pleaſe, Jews or gentiles, and upon what terms I pleaſe; and in theſe words to *Moſes* we have a prophecy of the admiſſion of the gentiles, or elſe it had not ſerved properly to our

Apoſtles

Apoſtles turn in this place: from whence the Apoſtle draws up this reſult, *ver.* 16. ſo then, *it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that ſheweth Mercy*, that is, *not of works but of grace*: and 2ly, as he hath left himſelf a liberty which none can queſtion, to ſhew Mercy to whom, or upon what terms he pleaſe, ſo alſo he hath the ſame liberty to inflict ſpiritual Judgements, yea, judicially to harden whom or what ſort of ſinners he pleaſe; and to be plain, (as if he ſhould have ſaid) God hath ſingled out above all ſinners as the ſubjects of this his ſeverity, ſuch as ſhall abuſe his long-ſuffering and goodneſſe, the firſt-born of which ſort of ſinners was *Pharaoh* of old, who is brought as a type of ſuch in all generations, both as to the nature of their ſin and deſtruction; and therefore the Apoſtle brings that ſaying of God to *Pharaoh*, *ver.* 17. which he quotes from *Exod.* 9. 16. *for this cauſe have I raiſed thee up, or dilivered thee from ſo many deaths, and kept thee yet alive, that I might make my power known in thee*: and that this *Pharaoh* was a lively type of theſe ſtubborn rebellious Jews, I think need not be queſtioned, and as the righteouſneſſe of God in his proceedings with *Pharaoh*, was never by any queſtioned, much leſſe denyed, no more can it be queſtioned in his dealings with the Jews, who trod in his ſteps: Now from both theſe Inſtances drawn from Gods ſayings to *Moſes* and *Pharaoh*, the Apoſtle draws up this reſult, *ver.* 18. ſo then *he hath Mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardens*, that is, hardens ſuch as *Pharaoh*, who firſt hardens themſelves in their own hearts againſt God as he did now; hereupon the Apoſtle ſuppoſeth the Jews raiſing another *Object. ver.* 19. if God hardens, why

doth he finde fault with those so hardened by him? seeing this his will is irresistable: for *who hath resisted his will?* wherein the Apostle doth personate a captious and quarrelsome person, not one making an humble objection with a desire of an answer, as doth plainly appear by the Apostles Reply to it, *ver.* 20. wherein he takes pains to humble and shame them for their bold, and sawcy, and quarrelsome disputing against God, which to effect he asserts the power, yea the unquestionable and inoffensive power of God to save and reprobate upon his own terms; to the justnesse and unquestionableness of which terms he doth amplifie by the similitude of a potter; who hath a power that none questions, to make vessels of honour and dishonour, and that upon his own terms, and upon his own discretion, that is to say, when he designes of a lump of clay to make an honourable vessel, and that piece of clay, marr, break, or run too course for such a vessel, he hath a power (which none questions) to make it again, the same lump or piece of clay, a vessel for a dishonourable use as he please: according to that place at least alluded unto *Jer.* 18. *ver.* 4. *and when thy second vessel is made, God may justly complain or finde fault that it would be no better a vessel, and the vessel cannot say, why hast thou made me thus?* becaus it was designed for a better; of which comparison of the potter, we have the reddition or application, *ver.* 22. 23. thus if the common & ordinary potter have such a power and priviledge which none is offended at, much more hath God power or liberty to make, vessels of honour of those who shall yeild to his hand and wheel, and fall in with his designe, whether Jews or gentiles: and consequeutly, hath not God

power

power that none can question to make them vessels of dishonour and wrath who have abused all his enduring, long-suffering, and patience exercised towards them: an Instance whereof we have in *Pharaoh*, and afterwards in the circumcised Jews; his power God claims, to make those vessels of wrath who abuse his goodnesse, and so *treasure up wrath against the day of wrath*: *Chap.* 2. but if a man cleanse himself he shall be a vessel of honour, prepared for the masters use, 2 *Tim.* 2. 21. thus I have given you in a few words the coherence and scope of this *Chap.* to the end of *verse* 23. The Apostle *Peter* 2 *Pet.* 3. 16. tells us, that in his beloved brother *Pauls* Epistles their are some things hard to be understood, which the *unlearned or unskilful wrest to their own destruction*, amongst which things (or sayings) this part of his writing this Chapter, cannot be exempted but necessarily comprehended, especially if we will observe the context or verse chiefly before, 2 *Peter* 3. 15. no portion of Scripture seems in the judgment of most men to be attended with greater difficulty, and many persons takes occasion from what is here declared to disparadge and obscure the universall and impartial love and grace of God to Mankinde in Jesus Christ: to prevent which mistakes, it will be altogether needfull in our reading this chapter to carry along in our eye the main scope and designe of the Apostle in what he here writes to this people, which was in a direct line to prove his grand *thesis*, namely, *justification by faith without the deeds of the law*: and therein this Chapter carries a compleat analogy with the former, and two following Chapters of this Epistle, the grand scope of all which is to convince the Jew of his sin, in not

believing

believing in Jesus Christ for life and salvation.

The Apostle in this Epistle and Chapter had an eye to the Jews great Argument, with respect to the covenant made with *Abraham*, which argument is by them formed thus: if not any be justified but by faith in Christ, then the Jews (though the natural seed of *Abraham*) are not justified, but are in the state of condemnation, for they hate Christ, have persecuted and slayn him: but it is absurd to conclude, that the Jews are not justified, therefore man may be justifyed some other way then by believing in Christ: and the *Minor* of this argument is strengthened by a three-fold fortification which the Jews think impregnable.

As first, say they, to the seed of *Abraham* was the promise made, and if they be not justified, then there is a failing in Gods word.

Secondly, there are not any amongst all the sons of men so zealous for righteousness, therefore they must needs be the persons justified.

Thirdly, say they, if they be not justified, then hath God cast off his own people which he hath chosen: But these things cannot be so, therefore this doctrine of justification by faith in Christ must be a doctrine of *Pauls* devising, and not the truth of God.

Now, my souls desire and prayer to God is, that the truth in this Scripture might clearly shine into the hearts of all that are sincere, who shall reade the ensuing matter; and that which I designe as I go along, shall be to discharge this Scripture from that hard service which it is prest to serve in; which is, to attest a personal absolute Election and reprobation, unchangeable and irrevocable, establisht before the foundation of the world;

which

which preordination of God doth unavoydably necessitate men to be what they are, and shall be, as to sin and death, Righteousness and life; which inference and conclusion will appear very forreign to the Apostles designe in this Chapter.

CHAP. I.

Personal Reprobation Reprobated.

Wherein is contained what reall, great, and constant sorrow the holy Apostle St. Paul *had for the miserable estate of the Jews under their sin of blindness.*

Vers. 1. *I say the truth in Christ, I lye not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the holy Ghost.*

IT may be easily and readily supposed, that the Apostle had here to do with a people, who partly through prejudice to the persons and partly his doctrine, were likely to be hardly perswaded that *Paul* had affection for them; that he had in his heart secret hatred and revenge against them for those injuries done to him; and therefore he is necessitated to take great pains to raise and beget in them a credit of his choyce love and affection to them, which he labours after, in the beginning of this Chapter: these 5 first verses contains the proem or preface to the Chapter.

In which preface, we have the Apostles most ardent and pathetical complaint and manifestation of sorrow, in the behalf of he Jews, his countreymen, who were not only ignorant, but persecutors of Christ and his Gospel, which rendred them in the Apostles judgement in a very sad and deplorable condition.

Now

Now these five verses are two ways understood.

First, some understand them to look backward to what the Apostle had been treating on before, in the former Chapter, in which he had been treating of the choyce priviledges of such as were believers in Christ, that they were not lyable to condemnation, that they were chosen of God, had the spirit, were heirs of God, joynt-heirs with Christ; and that nothing should be able to separate them from this their happy estate: some (I say) do judge that the Apostle having been deeply contemplating upon these things, breaks forth passionately and abruptly with these affectionat lamentations for those his Countreymen, who for the generallity of them lay short and at a distance from these priviledges.

Secondly, there are others, who understand these verses as a preface to what follows in this Chapter; and as a preparative to what he had to say, which I think is the likelyest to agree to truth; and I shall handle them as so understood; and that great truth which the Apostle takes such pains to fasten upon their hearts, was this, that he had a cordial and deep sence of the present state of the Jews and their condition, even to exquisite sorrow and grief.

In which sorrow we have four circumstances considerable.

First, the certainty of it.

Secondly, The greatness of it.

Thirdly, the cause of it.

Fourthly, the heightning circumstances of this sorrow which are two.

1. The Jews are his kindred.

2. They were such who had been invested with very great priviledges: of each of these a few words in order.

First,

First, the Apoſtle is very pathetical in this his atteſtation of the truth of this his ſorrow; he doth with much earneſtneſs aſſure them, that he had ſuch a ſimpathy with them, and ſorrow with them; he would command their belief in this point, and therefore doth he make a ſolemn and ſacred proteſtation and profeſſion in theſe words: *I ſay the truth in Chriſt, I lye not:* The certainty of this which the Apoſtle ſpeaks, is two ways confirmed.

Firſt, by his poſitive atteſtation, *I ſay the truth in Chriſt.*

Secondly, by his duplication or doubling his ſpeech on the negative as well as the affirmative (*I lye not.*)

Theſe words of our Apoſtle are read two ways: ſome reade inſtead of *in*, *by* Chriſt, not as we reade here: as *Paul* having an eye to Chriſt as a witneſs; as if he ſhould ſay; Chriſt thou knoweſt that I ſay nothing but truth, that my ſorrow is real, and ſo alſo doth my conſcience bear witneſs, and ſo doth the ſpirit of God alſo in this matter; and that this is the dialect of the Apoſtle, ſee elſewhere, *Gal.* 1. 10. *now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God I lye not:* ſo alſo 2 *Corinth.* 11. 31. *the God and father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt knoweth that I lye not:* I appeal to him that I lye not, as here.

But 2dly, the moſt both of antient and latter Interpreters underſtands and reades theſe words of the Apoſtle otherways, as containing in them the nature and force of an oath, becauſe the particle tranſlated *in*, (ſay they) may be more properly tranſlated *by*; and ſo ſaith *Calvin*, *Piſcator* and *Muſculus*, and ſo they reade thoſe words, 2 *Cor.* 12. 1. *I knew a man by Chriſt*; and of the ſame minde are moſt of our latter writers, who alſo takes theſe words

words as an asseveration or an oath, but take it either way, they carry in them a very pathetical attestation, that what the Apostle speaks concerning his sorrow for the Jews, was a real truth.

Secondly, It is farther ratified from his duplication in the negative (*I lye not*;) had it not been enough for the Apostle, that he had positively affirmed it, and called God to witness, that he had said the truth.

I answer, that it was usual amongst the Jews, when they speak earnestly, and with the greatest confidence, and in things considerable thus to double their speech: as for instance; in that Message to *Hezekiah*, *Esa.* 38. *thou shalt dye and not live*, so *Psalms* 118. *I shall not dye but live*: 1 *John* 20. *confessed and denyed not*; and this kinde of speaking was usual: see what pains the Apostle takes to perswade the Jews into as good Opinion of his love to them as a good Introduction to what he had to say to them: from whence I note by the way.

1. Doctrine, *That it is a matter of great concernment, in order to a right Receiving what is offer'd by a Gospel-Minister: that the people be satisfyed, that what he says, he speeks from the root of tender love and pitty to their souls.*

The Apostle did not think it lost labour in him to effect this end, by this means, before us; and the like pains he takes elsewhere: see 2 *Corinth.* 7. 3. *you are in our hearts to live and dye with you*: 2 *Corinth.* 11. 11. *God knows I love you*: *Philip.* 1. 8. *God is my Record, how greatly I long after you, in the Bowels of Christ*: see what pains he takes to perswade the Churches into a belief of his love to them: *Paul* takes pains also with the Jews to perswade them, that this sorrow was the effect of his

to

to them; which to do he could appeal to his own conſcience; he was always careful to make conſcience to his Friend: ſee *Acts.* 24. 16. 2 *Corinth.* 1. 12. therein *was his rejoycing*, and he knew the holy ſpirit ſtir'd him up to ſpeak that he ſpake: I might again note by the way.

2. Doctrine, *That it is warrantable in a Goſpel-Miniſter, in matters of concernment, where we doubt of being believed in things of God, to confirm what we ſay by obliging atteſtations and proteſtations, when we have in ſo doing a good conſcience*: I have ſhown this before, *Gal.* 1. 20. 2 *Corinth.* 11. 31. *Phil.* 18.

But ſome object, *Mat.* 5. 37. *let your communication be yea yea, nay nay, whatever is more then this cometh of evil*: to which I anſwer.

1ſt, That Chriſts deſigne in theſe words could not intend to oblige perſons to theſe ſyllabicall words of *yea* and *nay*.

2ly, Neither do they oblige us as to Number, that we muſt multiply no more, by way of atteſtation, for we muſt not imagine, that Chriſt would contradict his words in his own practice; was not Chriſts *verily, verily*, more then, *yea* and *nay*; and the Apoſtle did not underſtand our Lord ſo, as you may ſee before, but Chriſt in this place deſignes to take off the Jews from their voluntary vain oaths and atteſtations in their Communications one with another; as in *Jephthas* caſe, and many others: and to the ſame end tends the Apoſtle *James*'s words, *Chap.* 5. if Chriſts deſigne had been to forbid all kinde of ſwearing, there needed not to be an enumeration made, of what they ſhould not ſwear by; neither can ſwearing in a ſolemn way in the fear of God be a Moral Evil, which is uſed

to

by God himself, and Angels, and saints; in the purest times; but where Christ would enjoyn *yea* and *nay*, he there would oblige us, that what we affirm be truth: that our *yea* be *yea*, and our *nay* be *nay*: as S. *Paul* saith, *our words were not yea and nay.*

The 2d particular to be considered, is, the greatnesse of this grief and sorrow of the Apostle for the Jews; the Apostle is not satisfyed only to assert the truth of his sorrow, but the nature and degree of it, which as the learned tell us, is set forth in 3 circumstances, to be very great, therefore (say they) this word translated *sorrow* doth signify the *sorrow of a woman* in travel, used *John* 16. 21. *you now have sorrow*: and the Apostle to the *Galathians*, tells them, that *he was in travel for them*, *cha.*4.19.

2ly, This sorrow is set forth by the successive continuance of it, it is said here to be continually like the pains of a woman, one throw after another, night and day: It was not a transient sorrow but a seizing and lasting sorrow.

Therefore in the third place, the greatnesse is set forth by the seat of it, which is, the heart, sharp and deep: when the Scriptures speak of *sorrow of heart and soul* it intends sharp & exquisite sorrow; saith our Lord, *my soul is sorrowful unto death*: my sorrow is very great and deep.

The third circumstance to be considered is the cause of this sorrow, which is not so fully expressed as it is to be understood in our text; it is so great, that the Apostle cannot express it, his heart will not serve him to express in particulars the cause he saw for this sorrow: great grief sometime silenceth a man from giving the particulars of the cause: the substance of this cause was, that the Jews had rejected

ected Christ who was sent at first to save them, and hat now they were under judiciall blindeneſs from God thereupon: there is the ground of *Pauls* ſo great ſorrow; from whence I would note wo Obſervations by the way.

First Doctrine, *That perſons that miſs or ſtumble at Chriſt and the Goſpel, and are deſtitute of faith in Jeſus Chriſt, (however they may look upon themſelves,) do render themſelves objects of ſoul-pitty and heart-ſorrow.*

Perſons deſtitute of the true knowledg of God nd faith in Chriſt are in a ſad, a miſerable, nd deplorable ſtate and condition: here lyeth the ground of *Pauls* ſorrow; he underſtood the danger f ſuch a ſtate, as they were ignorant of Chriſt and is righteouſneſs, and thereupon judicial obduratneſs and blindneſs was upon them; ſuch was *Phaohs* caſe, ſuch was *Iſraels* caſe, *Eſa.* 6. and there s reaſon why their caſe ſhould be pittied and lamented, *Act.* 13. they are in a periſhing condition, *becauſe there is no other name under heaven by which men can be ſaved.*

Second Doctrine, *That to mourn, ſorrow, and lay to heart the ſin and miſery of others, by thoſe whoſe own condition is ſecure, good and ſafe, is a character of one whoſe heart is truly toucht for God.*

This was *Pauls* caſe, he knew his ſtate was good, but this doth not ſatisfy him ſo long as his kinſmen nd country-men were without Chriſt, and this was not only the ſpirit of *Paul*, but others of Gods ſervants: ſee *Pſalms* 119.53, 136, 139, 158. *Jerem.*

9. *Ezekiel* 19. 41. *v. Mark.* 3. 5. Christ is greived for the hardness of mens hearts. From whence we may learn; that sorrow for others is a true discovery of love to them; which is our duty; that it is a discovery of love, see in Christ to *Lazarus*, *John* 11. 35. *Behold, how he loveth him*: it is some priviledge to be mourned for in affliction, and in this the Jews had a priviledge, so had *Job*: his friends came to mourn with him, and for him; the contrary God threatned to *Nineveh*, *Nahum* 3. to *Jerusalem*, *Esa.* 51. 19. and it is a duty not only to mourn for those that mourn, but those that have cause to mourn; but I proceed to the next.

CHAP. II.

Asserting the great duty of Christians to mourn over the wofull estate of their unconverted relations; and how much they ought to do or suffer towards the furtherance of their salvation.

Ver. 3. *For I would wish my self accursed from Christ, for my Brethren, my kinsmen, according to the flesh.*

4. *Who are Israelites, to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the Covenants; and the giving of the Law; and the service of God, and the promises.*

5. *Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever, Amen.*

THe matter contained in these 3 verses, I shall summary into these three heads in general.

First,

First, we have a strong confirmation of the Apostles former affirmation and protestation, tending more fully to demonstrate his love to, and sorrow for the Jews rejection, which he had so pathetically spoken unto in the former verses.

Secondly, we have a character at large of the persons over whom he thus mourned and sorrowed for, in two considerations.

First, they were his brethren and kindred.

Secondly, they were a people dignifyed, and distinguisht with many singular priviledges, as above all the people in the world besides; which priviledges and immunities the Apostle doth in *verse* 4th and 5th enumerate under nine heads, as I shall shew you.

Thirdly, we have in these 3 verses a glorious *Ellogam* of Jesus Christ, in which we have these two things considerable.

First, a description of Christ what he is.

Secondly, we have the Apostle ascribing blessing and praise to him: in this *Ellogam* the Apostle hath a double design.

First, to heighten the priviledges of the Jews, of whose loins such a transcendant glorious person came.

2dly, His design thereby was to aggravate the sins of the Jews, and their condemnation, in that they should reject such a glorious and worthy person, who is blessed for ever.

I shall speak to these three heads briefly.

1st, As to the Apostles confirmation of his former protestation setting forth the reality and greatnesse of his love to the Jews, and sorrow for their Rejection, and that his love to and sorrow for them was very great, appears by this exigency which it

drove the Apostle unto, the Argument riseth thus, that person that can disprivilege himself even to extremity that he might thereby procure for others their exemption from sorrow and sufferings, must needs have strong love for those he intends therein, this was *Pauls* case, and this he would have the Jews sensible of, and that this was his heart to them, and consequently that he was not their enemy but their cordial Friend.

2dly, Herein is not only manifested his love to them; but the reality of his sorrow spoken of before, so that this third *vers.* is brought as an Argument to demonstrate, that his sorrow was real and great, and deep, that should drive him to such a wish of damage to himself, as to wish himself *accursed from Christ*, to the end they might be reduced from their unbelief and disobedience: the Apostle seems to wish himself in a state of damnation to bring them unto a state of salvation: Oh how great was this love of *Paul*? it did bear to a degree a resemblance to the love of God and Christ, both as to the greatnesse of the love and the undeservingnesse of the persons for whom, and to whom manifested, even to enemies: *Rom.* 5. he is willing to be Anathamized for his enemies: the Jews were *Pauls* enemies, and sought his life: as we reade *Acts* the 23. 13. about forty Jews layd wait for *Paul* to kill him.

But to come more closer to the words, and more strictly to enquire what is wrapt up in this his wish: Interpreters are much divided about this matter in their Opinions, and many of them very extravagant in their opinions, which I shall not meddle with: some there are, that the Apostle speaks not here as he really did mean, but parabolically,

lically, or by a figure, not properly and precisely to be understood; and that there is no more to be understood in it then this, that he could suffer a great deal for their good.

Secondly, Others think that he must be understood only conditionally in this his wish, if it could be, or were possible, as he speaks of the *Galathians*, they would have pulled out their own eyes, and have given them to him, if it had been possible; so if it were possible, *I could wish my self accursed*; but I think these extravagant interpretations, do not suite with the solemnes of the Apostles attestation and asseveration going before, to the truth and reallity of which his speech, he calls Christ's conscience and spirit to bear witnesse.

There are but three interpretations worth our taking notice of, and they are these.

First, some do understand him here, willing to hazard his eternal interest in God and Christ, and glory to come, as really to be separate from his Lord and saviour to all eternity.

2. Others understand the Apostle doth here intend by this *anathema* Excommunication out of the Church, or from the society of saints for their profit.

3. Others understand, that in this is not only by the Apostle intended a privation or loss, but a positive infliction of punishment besides: Of each of these a word or two.

1st, That which occasions some to think he doth here intend his inward state, is the word which is made use of to set it out by (*anathema*) imports; no less as sometimes us'd: as for Instance, 1 Cor. 16. *If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be* anathama *when the Lord shall come*: but I shall

lay down some reasons why it cannot be so understood, as if *Paul* hazarded his eternal state, the love and favour of God to all eternity, he wisht not to be so accursed.

It is greatly questionable, whether such a wish be lawful; to be so prodigal of his interest in heaven cannot be allowed: covetousness in spirituals is never blamed; and God doth never call for such a venture for brethren: our natural life is the highest requir'd for a brother, 1 *John* 3.

2dly, Such a wish could not be consistent with that dear love the Apostle did bear to Christ, to wish seperation from him upon any account whatsoever, doubtlesse he could not bear or endure a separation from Christ.

Thirdly, Such a suffering in the Apostle would have exceeded the sufferings of Christ for mankind; Christ did not expose himself to an eternal separation from God his Father; it is true he did endure for a little season the seeming hiding of his Fathers face, but this separation is not limited.

Fourthly, Such a state was worse then the state of the Jews themselves, they are not abdicated eternally from God; so that we cannot rationally think that *Paul* should wish himself accursed as to his inward state and spiritual condition, therefore something else must be enquired after.

2. Others understand the Apostles *anathema*, to be only excluded the society and assemblyes of the saints; to be excommunicated the Gospel Church; because sometimes and generally that is rendred by the name of *anathema*; as if the Apostle should have said, I could wish my self excommunicated from the Gospel-Church for their sake, not only to be deprived of the honour of an Apo-

stle,

ſtle, but of membership in the Church.

Obj. But ſome may ſay, our text ſaith *ſeparate from Christ*: I anſwer the Church is called *Christ*, 1 Corinth. 12. 12. *So likewiſe is Christ*, that is, the body of Chriſt; and our laſt expoſitors do ſo render it, and underſtand it, that the Church is called Chriſt: ſo Doctor *Hammond*: *Paul* did prize at a very high rate the Communion and fellowſhip of Saints, yet for the Jews ſakes he could have been content to have been excluded that ſweet and happy eſtate.

But 3dly, Others underſtand, and they are the moſt and beſt approved interpreters, that the Apoſtle doth wiſh not only a privation of good, and all his high priviledges, but a dreadful infliction of much ſufferings and corporal puniſhments; which amongſt the Jews did follow their *anathama*: they were delivered up to Sathan, they were expoſed to open ſhame and ignominy and deteſtation, they were anathamized, were diſdain'd of all, abhorr'd of all: ſo that according to that interpretation, this was the ſence of the Apoſtles words, I could wiſh my ſelf the veryeſt abject and object of ſhame and ſpite; let me be as thus expoſed to the worſt of ruines, yea, the moſt curſed death it ſelf: this interpretation ſeems to agree moſt currantly with the Scriptures; not that this *anathama* muſt intend the vengance of eternal fire but preſent rejection with deteſtation: ſo muſt we underſtand that word, *Gal.* 1. 8. 9. *If I, or an Angel from heaven, preach any other Goſpels, let him be anathama*; twice expreſt, that is, let him be rejected as an accurſed thing; let him be deteſted and abominated, and withſtood to the higheſt; and thus it muſt be underſtood, *Gal.* 3. 13. *Chriſt was made a curſe for us*,

which being made a curse, takes in all Christs suf-ferings and humiliation, from the begining to the end; all his contempt and shame, and spitting on, and crucifixion, all his abhorrency of man - *Esa.* 49. and this *anathama* the ultimate of it was death; and this understanding doth in some measure answer to *Moses* his wish, *Exo.* 32. 32. *Blot me out of thy book*; or as *Ainsworth* reads it, *let me dye*: for so the book of life is understood sometimes, *Psal.* 69. *let me*, saith *Moses*, *bear thy displeasure that thou hast against thy people*; and whereas now I am highly in thy favour, I am willing to bear thy displeasure, and death from that thy displeasure rather then *Israel* should be cut off. So here thus much the Apostles words amounts unto, that whereas now he was set by and esteemed of his friends, and all the faithful Churches of Christ, throughout the world, yet he could be content for his brethrens sakes, to be looked upon as a person not only at the greatest distance from his brethren, but from Christ himself: and to be judged worthy of the worst of deaths for his brethrens sakes: thus as in a glasse you see the most worthy and excellent spirit of the Apostle *Paul*, who before his conversion was a cruel and bloody persecutor, yet now, who like *Paul*, who so like Christ in his spirit as he? this deep sorrow in him was the fruit and effect of his tender love to them: *Paul* is willing to hazard much for the soul-good of many; such a spirit he manifested in his Ministry, he was willling to spend, and be spent for poor souls; 2 *Corinth* 1.12.

The soul-good of many should be a strong engagement upon our hearts to expose our selves to loss and sufferings, this was an engagement upon Christ: many were concerned, the world were

concerned,

concerned; this may be of great use to be considered by those intrusted with the work of the ministry; especially consider this example of *Paul*, to beget a spirit for publique good: if many are concerned as to their inward state, venture far.

We now proceed to the second head, which contains a description of the people and persons over whom the Apostle *Paul* thus cordially mourns and sorrows; they are described by a double character.

1. The relation they stood unto *Paul*, they were his *brethren and kinsmen according to the flesh*.

2. They for whom *Paul* thus mourned are a people greatly dignifyed, and distinguisht, with very high priviledges above all people in the world; besides which priviledges and immunities the Apostle doth enumerate *verses* 4. and 5. under nine heads.

1. They were Israelites.
2. They had the Adoption.
3. The glory.
4. The Covenants,
5. The giving of the law.
6. The service of God.
7. The promises.
8. Theirs were the fathers.
9. Christ came of that line.

A short word by way of explication to each of these.

1. That which heightened the Apostles sorrow for these people, was the near relation they stood to him, they were *his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh*: brethren is a word of general signification, and applicable to all men, without exceptions, yet here it is restrained; he doth not only call them brethren as they were from *Adam*;

but

but as they sprung from the loyns of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*; and he adds here, *according to the flesh*, because notwithstanding they were the seed of *Abraham*, yet they wanted the spiritual character, the faith of *Abraham*: yet *Paul* owns them as his brethren, as he and they were of the natural seed of *Abraham*; the Apostle doth fully own the brotherhood upon this account, *are they the seed of Abraham?* and more particularly, *Phil. 3. of the stock of* Israel; *of the tribe of* Benjamin, *or Hebrew of the Hebrews*, S. *Paul* had a dear love for the people, as they descended from the same *Jacob* and *Israel*, according to the flesh, though as yet enemies to the faith of *Abraham*, who foresaw Christ's day and rejoyced in it. Note this Doctrine by the way.

Doct. *That Christians stand engaged much to mourn for their unconverted kindred according to the flesh, and to take all possible means to convert them.*

Though it be a duty for Christians to do good to all in this respect, yet more especially for kindred and relations; to do much and suffer much for the salvation of our kindred; it is observed by the learned, that Christ as to his Ministry began at *Nazareth*, whereas he had been brought up to instruct them: see *Luke* 4. and doubtless if outward supplies are to begin there, much more spirituals: he is worse then an Infidel, that provides not for his own, they of his house.

We now proceed to the 2d branch of the Apostles description of this people, for whose unhappiness he thus mourns; which we have contained in the 4 and 5 *verses*, in which *verses* we have the

Apostle

Apoſtle making a diſtinct and particular enumeration of their ſeveral priviledges and immunities which they were honoured with.

1. They were *Iſraelites*, a title of high eſteem; ſometimes taken in a large, and ſometimes in a ſtrict ſenſe; in one Text in a large ſenſe, all that deſcended from the loyns of *Jacob*, after his name, was changed to *Iſrael*, for his princely power in prayer with God.

2ly, Sometimes *Iſraelites* are underſtood in a more ſtrict ſenſe for ſincere, holy perſons: thus *Nathanael* is ſaid *to be an Iſraelite indeed, in whom is no guile*: *John* 1. ſo *Gal.* 6. 16. ſuch as walk according to the Goſpel-rule, are called, *the Iſrael of God*, now here the Iſraelites are to be underſtood in a large ſenſe, and that was a priviledge to deſcend of him who was in ſuch eſteem with God: in the ſeed priviledge as was to them, did pertain the Adoption, that is, the childſhip, or ſonſhip: of all Nations God took them into his family as his ſons: *Iſrael* is call'd *Gods firſt-born*, *Exo.* 4. and not only were they ſo by title, but he provides them a worthy portion, the land of *Canaan*, a land flowing with milk and honey for their Inheritance.

They were ſo called Children, that in compariſon all the nations are called doggs, *Mat.* 15. 26. they are ſhut out and excluded from the childrens proviſion; whereas other nations in compariſon did dwell in the duſt of the earth, theſe children did dwell with God on the throne, as it were: the office of Adoption was placed amongſt them, that if any would come into Adoption, they muſt come in thorow them, by being proſelyted firſt to them, yet this high priviledge was but a ſhow of Goſpel-adoption by Chriſt, *Rom.* 8. 15. *Iohn* 1. 12. 1. *Ephe.*

5.

5. Adoption is to make a son by favour; Adoption is a legitimate act imitating nature.

3d Priviledge was, they had the glory, glory is divers ways taken in Scripture, sometimes for empty pomp and Majesty, *Mat.* 6. 26. *Solomon* in all his glory, in his riches, rule, splendor of apparel, and his earthly enjoyments. So also the sun is said to be glorious, thus *Israel* waa more glorious then any nation besides; they had the whole of outward glory. They had glory upon a spiritual account; the glory of God shown upon them; the Lord walkt in the midst of them; they had the ark of Gods presence, called the glory: 1 *Sam.* 4. from whence the temple was called the habitation of Gods glory, the place where his glory dwelt, *Psal.* 26. 8. other nations had no glory in comparison of *Israel*; they sate in the dust: God was a spirit, of glory upon them every way; and they are promised this glory upon them again upon their return, *Esa.* 60. *their God shall be their glory.*

4th Priviledge, the Covenants were given and made to them: these were the people that God entred into Covenant with in special; *Genes.* 17.

But may some say, did not God enter into Covenant with all flesh? *Genesis* 9. and the bow is a token of it still.

I answer, there are two sorts of Covenants, one conditional, the other free; that *Genesis* 9. is a Covenant without a condition, and it may be called a free promise on Gods side voluntarily, but a Covenant properly understood supposeth a mutual contract between two; and in this sort God made his Covenant with them: *Genesis* 17.

2ly, No people had the covenant renewed as they had from time to time, and therefore we have

have it here in the plural, *Covenants*; *Israel* was singularly dignified above other nations, yet this is not to be understood exclusively, but chiefly and eminently: *Israel* had the Covenants, that is, they were Feoffees in trust, as to the Covenants; if any of the gentils had any benefit in them, they must first be proselited to them.

The 5th priviledge was, that the law was given them; not only the law of ceremonies but the Ten Commandements was delivered to them: in speciall the ten Commandements are directed to them, as those whom God brought out of *Egypt*; to them were committed the Oracles of God: and that is a singular priviledge in Gods account; see *Psalm. 147. he hath not deale so with any nation, Acts 7. they received the lively Oracles of God*: and it is possible, that the Apostle in these words had a special eye to the manner of the giving of the law upon *Mount Sinai* in that magnificent and miraculous way, because he saith, *giving of the law*, it was no small priviledge to this people, that the law that they should be governed by, should be constituted and framed, and also given to them by *Jehovah* himself: Is it not a priviledge to that servant in a family, who is intrusted with the laws and rule by which the whole family is to be guided? the Jews had a superintendency in this point.

The 6th priviledge, that to them pertained the service of God: there is some difference amongst expositors about the meaning of this: some take it for divine worship, even the whole ceremoniall law; that they and they only were directed how to serve God therein: others understand it of the priests office, which was only from amongst them; there were no prophets but what was from among them

them, nor no priests to serve at the altar but of them; they only came near to God to serve him, *Deut.* 4. and 7. not any but *Aarons* sons and successors.

7th Priviledge, they had the promises pertaining to them only; but some may say what difference must we make between this and the former covenants? I answer that by promises here, we must understand, the free and voluntary, beneficient promises of God are begun in them: where do we finde in all the Old Testament-Scriptures any promise but what was made to them either present or to come? insomuch that when our Apostle *Eph.* 2. is setting forth the state of the unbelieving Gentiles, he declares them to be *without the promises*, as they were not *of the common-wealth of Israel*; and therefore it is said *Act.* 26. 6. *that the promises were made to the fathers*, to them was the free promises of Christ made: so that not any can come to understand the promises but by plowing with their heifer.

8th Priviledge, theirs are the fathers; it was their priviledge to be children of worthy Ancestors, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, who were worthy in the sight of God, and to whom he made great and precious promises, in which their childrens children were comprehended; it is a choice priviledge to come of a race accepted of God, as these did, they were descended of these worthy Fathers.

9th Priviledge, the last but not the least of their priviledges was this, *that Christ came of that line according to the flesh*: In which words we have something expresst and something implyed; the Apostle supposeth that Christ had another nature then that of the flesh.

2.

2. It is positively expreſt, that Christ was born of them; it was a great priviledge to mankinde that the ſon of God would take our nature, and a ſingular priviledge to that family in particular of whom he came, he was born of a ſiſter of *Iſrael*, of mankinde: therefore *Simeon* might well ſay and ſing, *Luke* 2 32. that Christ *was the glory of his people Iſrael*: and well might *Mary* the mother of Christ ſay *from thenceforth all generations ſhould call her bleſſed*: Is it not an honour to a family to have an earthly prince deſcend of it, much more muſt it be a priviledge to have the ſon of God to deſcend of *Iſrael*: Thus I have briefly toucht theſe diſtinct priviledges which theſe people had been inveſted with, who are now ſo unhappy, and for whom the Apoſtle is ſo deeply ſorrowful: but why doth the Apoſtle make ſuch a particular enumeration of their birth-priviledges?

First, that he might remove from their mindes the leaſt ſuſpicion of prejudice in his minde againſt them, whilſt he is not willing to obſcure the leaſt ſpark of their glory according to the fleſh. It is true where want of love is, it is uſuall with men to ſlight others as to their priviledges: but it was not ſo with the Apoſtle, he is free to own what he might, *Rom.* 3. 1, 2. he ſaith, their priviledges were much every way: St. *Paul* was far from ſlighting the Jews as to their outward priviledges, which commonly is a fruit of want of love.

2. This enumeration of their priviledges might be to aggravate their ſin the more, who did not believe, notwithſtanding they ſtood upon the upper ground of all theſe advantages, they were Christs own before as it were, *John.* 1. *he came to his own and his own receiv'd him not.*

I shall note a few things briefly from what hath been said, and so passe along.

First Doctrine, *That the body of the Circumcised Jews indefinitely, and universally considered were transcendently exalted, dignified and distinguished, with very great priviledges above all the world besides, they were beloved for their fathers sakes.*

Second Doctrine, *It is possible for persons invested with the highest priviledg under heaven to be enemies to Jesus Christ.*

Third Doctrine, *That a person or people enjoying the highest priviledges under heaven, yet short of believing in, and closing with, and obeying Christ, are in a state and condition to be lamented*: Or thus, *that believing in, accepting of, and obeying Jesus Christ, is the sum and substance of all priviledges*; It was not so great a priviledge to be Christs Mother, as to be Christs disciple.

Fourth Doctrine, *It is a right Gospel-Spirit, and savours of love and respect to our enemies to acknowledge what is worthy in them, as they have received it from God*: see *Act.* 26.27. King *Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know thou believest*: *Rom.* 10.2. the Apostle acknowledgeth their zeal, though he saith, *it was not according to knowledge.*

Fifth Doctrine, *That is good to let persons know what God hath done for them, as to outward benefits and priviledges*: see *Nathan* to *David*: so *Paul* to the *Galathians*, chap. 4. 15. *Heb.* 10. 32. *Revel.* 2. 6.

We

We now proceed to the third and last head, which is the Apostles glorious *Ellogam* of Jesus Christ; when the Apostle hath occasion to mention Jesus Christ, he doth it with great honour and respect: in this *Ellogam* we have two circumstances considerable.

1. A Description of Jesus Christ, as to his deity and dignity in it self.

2. An acknowledgment of the glory due to him from us.

1. In this discription of the Deity and dignity of Christ, we have the Apostles voluntary acknowledgment of Christ to be God over all: and this the Apostle doth for two ends.

First, still to exalt the Jews priviledges.

2ly, To aggravate their sin in rejecting such a Saviour who is God over all.

That Jesus Christ is God over all things and persons in heaven and earth the Scriptures are plain in, and also, that the title of God appropriated to Jesus Christ is plain, see *Acts.* 20. 28. 1 *Timothy.* 3. 16. *God manifested in the flesh. Titus.* 2. 13. the great God therefore eternal and everlasting, blessing and praise due, and proper to him, See *Heb.* 13. *Rev.* 1. One Point by the way.

Doct. *That the love and respect a true believer hath, and owes to Jesus Christ, doth so rule in him, that he cannot mention him without honour and praise, who is to be blessed for ever,* saith our Text; this is the work of Saints here and hereafter to all Eternity, *Rev.* 5. and *chap.* 11.

But why is this Article *Amen* here added? It is a Greek word, the Engliſh of it is commonly *verily*, and it hath a twofold ſignification according as it is placed: when it is placed in the beginning of a ſentence either in the Old or New Teſtament, it carries in it an atteſtation and aſſeveration: See *Pſal.* 37. *verily thou ſhalt be fed*: *Pſal.* 39. *verily every man is vanity*: and it is commonly ſo uſed by Chriſt, ſometimes ſingly and ſometimes doubly: We have it by him about 50. times uſed ſingly in *John*; only about 24. times *verily, verily*; *amen, amen*, is a word of atteſtation, but when it is uſed in the end of a ſentence, it ſignifies the ſouls deſire of the performance of the promiſes: as ſee *Deut.* 27. twelve times all the people ſhall ſay *amen*, or, *let it be ſo with all my ſoul*; thus it is underſtood 1 *Cor.* 14. 16. *how ſhall he that occupieth the place of the unlearned, ſay amen at the giving of thanks?* ſo it muſt be underſtood, *Rev.* 1. ſo *chap.* 22. *let it be ſo I wiſh with my ſoul*: and it ſuppoſeth more then a bare wiſh, but it carries in it an eccho of faith; it ſhall be ſo, as in this Text is read, *who is to be or ſhall be bleſſed for ever.*

One Note, and ſo I ſhall conclude the Preface.

Doct. *It is not only the ſoul-deſire, but the undoubted faith of Saints, that Chriſt ſhall be glorified*; the Saints can ſay *amen* to this truth.

Thus we have done with the Preface to this Chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Plainly Demonſtrating, That the wiſe and holy God in chooſing to ſalvation Eternal, and Reprobating to damnation Eternal, hath a ſpecial eye to Qualifications.

Ver.6. Not as though the word of God had taken none effect, for they are not all Iſrael which are of Iſrael.

HAving now finiſhed the Apoſtles Preface contained in the five firſt *verſes*, we now proceed to the body of matter contained in this Chapter, which matter calls for our moſt ſerious conſideration, to the end we might attain to the true intent and meaning of the ſpirit therein.

It appeareth upon the firſt caſt of our eye upon this Scripture, that the Apoſtle had in good earneſt to do with a ſtout and ſtrong adverſary, with whom he is joyning iſſue, and that with all his might; and this enemy was the zealous circumciſed Jew, boaſting of his carnal priviledges, and expecting juſtification and ſalvation by the deeds of the law, in oppoſition to Chriſt and the Goſpel: they being (as they preſumed) the ſeed of thoſe to whom the promiſes were by God at firſt made; and hereupon their confidence was raiſed very high of their ſafe eſtate. Now to ſuch a people doth the Apoſtle here addreſſe himſelf. And his great deſigne (as we may clearly ſee) is to aſſert Juſtification and ſalvation to come in only and alone by faith in Jeſus Chriſt without the deeds of the law.

Now the course and Method which the Apostle proceeds in is this; First, to weaken and dissolve their grand objections, and take off those absurdities which seemed to the Jews to follow upon the Apostles Doctrine of Justification by faith alone.

Those two Objections which he knew lay in their mindes were these.

1. If the circumcised Jews be not Justified and saved unto whose fathers God had made such a plain promise, and renewed from day to day, and from time to time, then it renders God not so good as his word, then his word is of none effect: But it is absurd to imagine Gods word to be fallible: *his promises are yea and amen*; therefore the circumsised *Israel* must be Justifyed and saved, though they do reject Jesus Christ and the Gospel: this is the sum of the first Argument and Objection.

The 2d Objection is this: *If* God justifyeth the heathen, the nations, sinners of the Gentiles, that are strangers to God, and that without works of legal righteousnesse, and reject us who are comparatively a righteous people, walking in his ways, living in his Ordinances, and worshiping him; then doth the ways and proceedings of God favour of unrighteousnesse, and seems to bear a resemblance of justifying the unrighteous, and condemning the righteous; which as *Abraham* said of old, is very far from God: therefore it must needs be the seed of *Abraham*, that are the subjects of justification and acceptance with God. Now that this must needs be the substance, will appear from those answers which the Apostle shapes out to them in the following verses: and the taking off the first of these Objections, takes him up the 6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13. verses; and the taking off the

the second Objection, takes him up the greatest part of the *chapt.* from the 14. *ver.* forwards.

As to the first of these Objections, the Apostles conceis with them, that Gods word cannot fayl, his promises are yea and amen, *vers.* 6. not as though the word of God had taken none effect; Gods word and promises are certain and true, and yet you may be rejected; which to demonstrate he proceeds to distinguish of the seed of *Abraham*, and to shew, that God in his special promise to *Abraham*, did not intend the natural and fleshly seed of *Abraham*, but such as shall be of the faith of *Abraham*: this the Apostle speaks largely unto *ver.* 6 to the 9. and to back and confirm this position, that God did not intend *Abrahams* seed according to the flesh, the Apostle doth descend to some instances of some persons within the compasse of their grant, who though they were the seed of *Abraham*, yet were not heirs of the promise: the first Instance is of *Ishmael*, who though a child of *Abraham*, yet was by Gods appointment cast out of the family, and disinherited from a share with *Isaac*; and whereas they might readily pleade he was cast out, partly because he was the son of the bondwoman, and partly for misdemenour, because he was seen mocking *Isaac*, the Apostle proceeds to give an instance without exceptions; which is *Esau*, who was the immediate Off-spring of *Isaac*, in whom the promise did more especially center, yet he is hated and comparatively ruinated, which things we have treated on to *ver.* 13. all which tends to strengthen the Apostles distinction that *Abrahams* seed was not intended the natural or fleshly seed, but the seed acoording to faith; to which the Apostle to the *Galathians*;

chap. 3.29. doth fully speak; *if ye be Christs, then are you* Abrahams *seed, and heirs according to promise*: So that if *Esau* be not an heir, it is because he is not Christs by faith and obedience: so that that seed of *Abraham* who are the elect seed, are such as own and believe in Christ; therefore if the Jews though the natural seed of *Abraham*, do reject Jesus Christ, Gods word of promise stands good and stedfast, although the unbelieving Jews are rejected: But I shall speak more particularly to each verse and begin at the 6 verse.

And the Method which I shall follow in the prosecution of this work, is this.

1. To shew the designe, drift and scope of the text and context.

2. To open those words that may seem difficult and want explaining.

3. Reduce the whole into such doctrinal conclusions as may be most proper and profitable, and all this with as much conciseneſſe as the matter will admit.

I shall at once cast my eye upon 3. or 4. *verses*, as to their main scope and tendency.

As 1st, I shall take notice of those *verses* in which the Apostles work is to manage his distinction of *Abrahams* seed, *ver.* 6.7.8.9.

I begin with *ver.* the 6. in which the Apostles designe is, to assert the stedfastneſſe of Gods word of promise made to *Abraham*, notwithstanding his rejecting the carnal unbelieving Jew, as not the right seed.

Therefore the Apostle in the 1st place doth disclaim the least whisperous secret imagination of minde that Gods word or promise should be liable to fail: These words are read three ways.

1st, It

1ſt, It cannot be that the word of God hath ſailed. Others reade, it is not poſſible that the word of God ſhould miſcarry: Others reade, but not that the word of God is fruſtrated: there is no material difference in theſe readings, they all amount to thus much: to atteſt the ſtedfaſtneſſe and certainty of Gods promiſes to thoſe to whom they are made: By *word* we are generally to underſtand the word of promiſe; ſee *Pſal.*106.24 and 119.38.

I ſhall only note two points by the way, and ſo paſſe.

First Doctrine, *That ſometimes ſome paſſages of Gods providences doth ſeem to croſſe his promiſes.*

This paſſage ſeems to give occaſion to queſtion whether the word of God had not failed; and thus it ſeemed in that paſſage of *Abrahams* offering up of *Iſaac*, as alſo in Gods carrying *Iſrael* into *Egypt*, ſo alſo in the death of Jeſus Chriſt, *John* 12.34. that Chriſt ſhould abide for ever ſeemed to be the promiſe: ſo in this paſſage before us, it ſeem'd as if God had caſt off his people; *Rom.* 11. 1. the Phraſes and ſayings of Scripture ſeems to be contradictory many times, that ſuch as are inconſiderate men may be in danger to wreſt them to their own deſtruction 2 *Peter.* 3. 16.

But Secondly, *That however circumſtances may appear to us, it is ſafe to conclude, that Gods word and promiſe rightly underſtood are certain and unfallable.*

And that Opinion or ſaying whatſoever which carries in it a queſtion of the truth of Gods promi-

ses is in it self false and unsound: we see here what pains the apostle takes to deliver himself from the least imputation of his interfering with Gods promises: in what he had been asserting in the former two verses, as to the priviledges and promises to this people; the Apostle would have God true though all men are lyers: see what he saith, *Rom.* 4. 16. the promises are sure to all the seed, 2 *Corinth.* 1. 20. *all the promises are in Christ yea and amen; for he is a God that cannot lye, Titus.* 1. Gods *Counsels* are by the same Apostle said to be immutable.

Now the Apostle in vindication of the stedfastness and immutability of Gods promises to *Abraham* takes it for granted, that *Abraham* had two sorts of seed; a seed according to the flesh, and a seed according to promise, but the seed according to the flesh was not the seed to whom the promise was made at first: *for* (saith he) *all are not* Israel *which are of Israel*; but how is this to be understood? did he not say before, they were *Israel*, it's without exception? I answer, so he doth also here, own them to be of *Israel*, but they were not *Israel* themselves; they had not *Abrahams* nor *Jacobs* spirit, as Christ told the Jews, *John* the 8th. though he grant them to be *Abrahams* seed, yet they had not the spirit of *Abraham*; inasmuch as they sought to kill him, and so manifest themselves to be of their father the devil, though of *Abrahams* seed: so these are not *Israel*, because they rejected Gods way by Christ.

I shall note one point by the way, and pass.

Doct. *That true heirship to Gods singular promises comes in by a supernatural way, by a spiritual birth: and not by common generation.*

Persons

Persons were never in no age born heirs of singular and speciall glory; it is not an Israelite but an Israelite indeed, that is worthy of special noting by Christ: *John* 1. saith Christ of *Nathanael, behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile,* therefore let none expect heirthip or acceptance from God from carnal or birth-priviledges, of most godly parents: and this is farther ratified *vers.* the 7th, *neither because they are the seed of* Abraham *are they all children,* that is, Children of God they are not.

Doct. from the 7th, *vers. The true seed of* Abraham, *in all ages are such as bears resemblance to* Abraham *in faith and love.*

It is frequent in Scripture to reckon persons the Children of those whom they resemble in good or evill; some of these *Israelites* are the Children of the *Ammonites* and the *Hittites, Ezek.* 16. some of them Children of the Adulterer and the whore, *Esa.* 57. 30. yet *Abrahams* seed in a large sence: nay some of these very Jews, *John* 8. 44. are the children of the Devil; and why? but because they resembled the Devil in their lying and murthering: so the women 1 *Peter* 3. 6. *are children of Sarah,* who carry it as she did: *Gal.* 3. 29. *if ye be Christs then are you* Abrahams *seed,* but these did not imitate *Abraham.*

But he adds, *in* Isaac *shall thy seed be called;* I shall speak but a very few words to this clause in this place, because I shall have a more proper occasion afterwards.

The occasion of these words was this, *Sarah* taking notice, that *Ishmael Abrahams* son by *Hagar* the Bond-

Bondwoman, *proved* a scoffer, and mocked *Isaac* her own son, she made it her request to *Abraham* to turn him and his mother out of doors, but *Abraham* at present seeming somewhat slow and unwilling to answer his wifes desire herein, at last God commands the same thing of *Abraham*, which before his wife desired of him; and that this act might not be too grievous to him, of casting out his son, God gives him this word of encouragement and satisfaction, *in* Isaac *shall thy seed be called*, Gen. 21.12. he shall be thy son and heir, and *Ishmael* shall have no share with him. So that God who doth not use to contradict himself in his promise to *Abraham* and his seed, doth not intend *Ishmael*, though a child of *Abrahams* body.

Vers. 8. *That is, they which are the children of the flesh are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.*

In which words we have contained a more clear interpretation and explication of those passages, *ver.* 6, and 7. spoken by God, and the Apostle, *that all are not* Israel *that are of* Israel, *nor all children because they are the seed of Abraham*, but *in* Isaac *shall thy seed be called*. This verse hath the note of interpretation upon it in these words (*that is*) or as some reade, *that is to say*, and this kinde of speaking is used by way of interpretation elsewhere also, *Rom.* 7. 18. *in me* (that is) *in my flesh*: so *chap.* 10. 6. 7. (that is) now this explication contains in it a negative and an affirmative, which kinde of Dialect in Scripture is the most certain and obliging kinde of speaking that can be.

First,

First, we have it negatively, *the children of the flesh are not the children of God.*

2dly, Affirmatively, *but the children of the promise are counted for the seed:* that which will be necessary in order to the prosecuting this subject, will be,

1. To explain who may be understood by the children of the flesh.

2. Who may be understood by the children of the promise.

First, Who are the children of the flesh.

I answer, Children of the flesh must be taken in the largest sence, that so it may be the more teaching to us: children of the flesh may bear a threefold acceptation.

First, Such as have only a natural birth as the off-spring of *Adam*: thus must *John* be understood, *Joh.* 3.6. *that which is born of the flesh is flesh*; and that Christ had such a birth as this is plain, *Rom.* 1.3. *he was born of the seed of* David *according to the flesh*, that is, as man: So *ver.* 5. *of whom according to the flesh Christ came*, that is, was born: Now the greatest number of men and women in the world have this birth only, and so are children of the flesh: In this sense *Ishmael* is said to be born after the flesh, that is to say, in a common way of generation, as the rest of the sons of *Adam*: as *Abraham strong*, and *Hagar* in a natural capacity *to bring forth.*

Secondly, Children of the flesh in Scripture are taken for such as give themselves up to the guidance of the fleshly minde and affections, to follow the dictates of the natural man, the old man; these are said to walk after the flesh, and be in the flesh, this our Apostle speaks fully unto, *Rom.* 8. from

vers.

ver. the 1. to the 13. and such a person so walking may be called a child of the flesh, let his profession be what it will: and in this sence *the spirit* is said to *war against the flesh*, *Gal.* 5. that is the fleshly minde: and this was the minde that S. *Paul* war'd against, 2 *Corinth.* 10.

Thirdly, and chiefly, children of the flesh are understood to be such as look for justification and acceptance with God, upon the account of the works of the law; circumcision and Obedience to the ceremonial law: this is plain, for flesh and works of the law, are often taken one for another; and by this our Apostle, *Rom.* 4. 1,2. *what shall we say then, that* Abraham *our father, according to the flesh, hath found? for if* Abraham *were justified by works*: that which is called flesh in the first part of the verse is called works in the latter part: this is understood, *Gal.* 3, 3. *of being made perfect by the flesh*: and so chap. 4. 29. *he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit*, that is he that was born according to the works of the law: and thus S. *Paul* must be understood: *Phil.* 3. *though he was circumcised, and kept the Law, yet he had no confidence in the flesh*: now in this third sense must our text be understood, the children of the flesh are not the children of God: Adoption and heirship doth not come in that way; they that have nothing else to plead must stand off: let us take it in which sense we will, the text is here, *the children of the flesh are not the children of God.*

1. Such as have only nature.

Nor 2ly, those who live after the flesh, though they profess to believe in Christ.

Nor 3dly, those who are most circumspect as to the observation of the law, except they believe in and obey Jesus Christ. Secondly,

Secondly, who are the Children of the promiſe, unto whom theſe are oppoſed? By children of the promiſe muſt be underſtood ſuch as reſt and depend upon the free promiſe of God in Chriſt for life and ſalvation: believers in Chriſt who ſeek for acceptance and ſalvation by him alone, ſuch as are begotten to love and obedience by the power of the promiſes: To this doth the Apoſtles words agree, *Such as are Chriſts, are the ſeed and heirs according to the promiſes*: therefore doth the Apoſtle oppoſe the Law to the promiſe, *Gal.*3.18. *For if the inheritance be of the Law, it is no more of the promiſes*; but God gave it to *Abraham* by promiſe: So alſo *Gal.*4.14. *if they that are of the law be heirs*, their faith is made void, and the promiſe of none effect: the Goſpel is a diſpenſation of promiſes, and conſequently of faith: S. *Paul* calleth the Saints, *Heb.*6.17. *the heirs of promiſes*: So alſo *Gal.* 4.28. *We as Iſaac are children of the promiſes*: So that when the Apoſtle ſaith here, *the Children are counted for the ſeed*, he intends not others then true believers in Chriſt Jeſus: Thus I have briefly anſwered theſe two Queſtions, in order to the explication of the words.

I ſhall now ſummary the firſt part of the words into this Doctrine.

Doct. *That the true ſeed of* Abraham *are not, nor were not at any time eſtimated or accounted as they were found in the external profeſſion or practice of Ordinances, though of Gods own appointment, but of ſuch who under ſuch Ordinances had the life and power of them in their hearts.*

The

The true heirs of juſtification and ſalvation were in all ages intended to be inwardly and believingly children of God: God did never accept of any outſide profeſſors ſince the beginning; but as he was a ſearcher of hearts allways, ſo he allways required heart and inſide-worſhip: he did always require to be worſhipped with heart, ſoul, and ſtrength. In *Abels* time *Cain* was a worſhiper as well as *Abel*, but the difference lay in the inſide of the worſhip, therefore it is ſaid, *Heb.* 11. 4. *by faith* Abel *offered to God a more acceptable ſacrifice then* Cain.

In the time of Circumciſion God was not ſatisfyed with a fleſhly circumciſion only, but God calls for circumciſion of heart, *Deut.* 10. 16. *circumciſe therefore the foreskin of your hearts:* and we ſee the ſevere threatnings of God againſt *Iſrael* for the want hereof, *Ierem.* 9. Inward ſpiritual worſhip was always required, and much more in Goſpel-days: therefore Chriſt tells the Jews, *John*, 6. 53. *Except you eat the fleſh of the ſon of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you*, *Rom.* 2. 28. he is not a Jew who is ſuch outwardly; God almighty was ſo cautious and careful, leſt men ſhould bear upon works for Juſtification and acceptance with him thereupon, that he declares *Abraham* juſtified before he was circumciſed; and that our Apoſtle takes ſpecial notice of, *Rom.* 4. 11. *Abraham received circumciſion*; a ſeal of the righteouſneſſe of the faith which he had; being not yet circumciſed: to which agreeth theſe words, *verſe*, the 5. *now to him that worketh not, but believeth in him that Juſtifieth the ungodly, his faith is accounted to him for righteouſneſſe*: ſo that it is plain, that the ſpirit of God is greatly concerned in beating men off from bearing upon works of righteouſneſſe: and we ſee the

ſpirit

spirit of St *Paul* to this purpose, *Titus* 3. 5. *not by works of righteousnesse that we have done but according to his mercy he saved us.* This *Doct.* seems to discover to us a great mistake amongst professors in this day; there are but a few who do not erre on this hand, to bear upon their external obedience to ordinances, and raise their comforts and hopes from thence: Is not this like the plea of the pharisee? *Luke.* 18. *I fast twice in the week*; are there not many who bless themselves upon this account? and this appears, because your comforts are high and low, according to your duties: but some may say, ought it not so to be? I answer, you must have a special care to keep allways in a clear sight and sense and assurance of your relation you stand in to God; if you are truly regenerated persons and are begotten from above, do not easily let go that hold; it is the duty of a child to grieve that he hath offended his loving father? but not to call in question his relation to him thereupon: God doth not unchilde for every fault, nor for many sins, if they be not wilfully committed: but I pray mistake me not, I would not have Gods children passe lightly over their miscarriages against him, nor their unanswerable returns to him, but mourn cordially as *David* and *Peter* did, not in slavish but filial frame of spirit: but know this, that our sanctification is not the ground of our justification, but the Demonstration of it: good works may demonstrate our justification.

2. Let each of us be instructed from hence, to have a special care that we do not bear or rest upon our Gospel-obedience for acceptance or justification, namely, our Baptism, nor other gospel-obedience in ordinances: for this we may be assured.

red of as a truth, that if legal performances of Gods appointment were not accepted, being only outward, much less are gospelperformances in ordinances acceptable without the spiritual part of them: Baptism hath an inside as well as circumcision, which consists in two parts: death to sin, life to righteousness: now if we have not this inside, we are in a sence children of the flesh, and so not the children of God: therefore S. *Peter* takes both parts, 1 *Peter* 3. *not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience*; so doth Christ, *John* 3. a true baptized Disciple of Christ, is one in whom Christ dwels by faith, *Eph.* 3. 17. the Ordinance of the Lords supper hath an inside, a spiritual part: our hearts are to be fed as well as our bodies: we are (as Christ saith) *to eat his flesh and drink his blood*, or else *we have no life in us*: it is the spiritual part attending the outward that renders a person acceptable to God: for he seeks such, especially now, who *worship him in spirit and truth*, John 4.

Abraham did much in going out of his countrey, and offering up his son, yet his justification came in by his faith: *Rom.* 3. it is true, his works did manifest the life and truth of his faith, *Iames* 2. but it is said, *Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness*.

3. If the children of the flesh or law, be not the children of God, then certain it is, that the children of faith are; and so thou who art a Gentile-believer, art one of them: it may be much encouragement to a poor gospel-believer; it appears thou wert one of those whom God had upon his heart in his promise to *Abraham* at first: the promise made to *Abraham*, that he should be heir of

the

the world, was made upon gospel-terms not fleshly, *Rom.* 4. 13. *If you are believers in Christ, you are the proper heirs of that promise with him*, and so the most proper children of God, though thou art a Gentile: so was *Zacheus*; yet upon his believing he is pronounc't a child of *Abraham* by Jesus Christ himself, *Luke*, 19. 9. It is the judgment of some learned men that *Abrahams* children may be divided into four ranks, or are of four sorts.

1. Such as were his natural children according to a fleshly race, who were no sharers in the promise, such were *Ishmael* and *Esau*.

2. Some who were descended of *Abrahams* loins, and were heirs of those temporal promises of *Canaan*, and such like, such were the fleshly posterity of *Isaac* and *Jacob*.

3. Such as descended of *Abrahams* loins according to the flesh, and not only so, but such as were truly godly, and had the faith of *Abraham*, even faith in Christ, as *Abraham* had.

4. Such as are not of the fleshly seed of *Abrahams* loins at all, but were only believers: of which sort are all the believing gentiles, and these two latter sorts may be reckoned into and are the children of the promise, which leads us to speak unto the affirmitive part of this interpretation; *But the children of the promise are accounted for the seed.*

In handling this head, I shall cast my eye to the verse before and verse following, *ver.* 7. *ver.* 9. *In* Isaac *shall thy seed be called*, which saying is taken out of *Gen.* 21. 14. and the occasion we may there see in the former part of the chapter, which was this (as I minded before:) after *Isaac* was born and grown to some years, *Sarah* his mother takes notice of *Ishmael* the bond-womans son, offering some

abuſe to her ſon *Iſaac* in mocking him; ſhe is ſorely diſpleaſed thereat, and beſought her husband to caſt both ſon and mother out of doors, but *Abraham* having love to his ſon, it ſeemed grevious to him, to put her requeſt in execution; but ſoon after God himſelf ſpeaks to him, and bids him hearken to his wife in this matter, and put the ſon and mother both out of doors, and he gives *Abraham* this as an argument, that *Iſhmael* ſhould not inherit with *Iſaac*, *but in* Iſaac *his ſeed ſhould be called*: that *Iſaac* ſhould be the heir alone without *Iſhmael*: now *Abraham* having received this command from God, proceeds accordingly, *ver.*14. *Abraham aroſe early in the morning* to perform that ſervice which was too grievous to him in himſelf: it is worthy our noting.

By the way note this Doctrine.

That our father Abraham *was of a tractable frame of ſpirit to Gods will, though in things croſſe and contrary to his own will and intereſt*: *Abraham* is not only willing to do it but he riſeth early to do it.

This he did alſo in the offering up *Iſaac*, *chap.* 22. his dear and only ſon, he did ariſe early to go about it; this was the ſpirit of our father *Abraham* whoſe ſteps we are to follow, *Rom.*5. 12. in order to bleſſing *Abraham*, God called him to his foot, *Eſa.* 41.2.

Let us learn this leſſon from it, be like *Abraham* herein, it was kindely taken at his hand: God reckons him his friend, *James* 2. 23. and this priviledge is promiſed, *John.* 15. 14. *Ye are my friends when ye do whatſoever I command you*: if thou beeſt a believer

a believer thou must look to *Abraham* thy father, *Esa.* 51. but I only touch this by the way, and now come to the words *ver.* 7. *In* Isaac *shall thy seed be called.*

It is not here to be understood, that all that come of *Isaacs* loins acording to the flesh are here meant, for we know *Esau* came of *Isaac*, but *Isaac* is here exhibited as a type of the true seed; they must resemble *Isaac* in this birth: but I shall meet with this in the interpretation as it followeth: *the children of the promise are accounted for the seed.* I have already spoken something to the explaining these words, *who are these children of promise:* in general, they are such as are begotten by the promise through Christ; but I would speak more particularly a few words.

1. It is to be noted, that the Apostle doth not here say, *the children of promise*, with respect to *Isaac* alone personally considered: but the Apostle had an eye to a race or generation of men so qualified, that is to say, such as resemble *Isaac*, as to his extraordinary birth, and the extraordinary interposer of Gods power: therefore he saith in special, *the children of the promise:* it is undeniably plain, that if the Apostles designe had been here to lift up *Isaac* as a type of absolut personal election, he needed not to have proceeded this way as he doth, to compute *Abrahams* seed by *Isaac*, and by him in such a way: but if the Apostles designe was to render *Isaac* as a type of such a sort of persons, so qualified, then the whole context will concurr with it.

2. Whereas the Apostle here stileth these persons acceptable with God, *children of the promise*, we are to understand, such persons as the promi-

ses are directed unto, which is Originally and comprehensively to and in Christ; for this we have an Emphatical place, *Gal.* 3. 16. *Now to* Abraham *and his seed were the promises made*, he saith not, *to seeds*, a *many*, but *one* which is Christ: so that in a true construction *children of promise* and *children of Christ* are the same, for Christ is the apparent and immediate heir of the promise.

To confirm this, we have a remarkable place, *Gal.* 3. 29. *if ye be Christs then are you* Abrahams, and consequently *Isaacs* seed, *and heirs according to promise*; so that the Apostle here doth instruct us, that election consists of such a sort of persons so qualified, the specifical seed of *Isaac*: such a kinde of persons therefore might the Apostle well say, *Eph.* 1. 4. *according as he hath chosen us, in him, before the foundation of the world*, that is in Christ.

3. This truth is further confirmed, if we consider, that children of promise must suppose *children of faith*: a promise requires believing: *Abraham believed Gods promise, and it was accounted for righteousneße*: so that we have *Isaac* here set forth as a lively type of the nature, not the number of those who shall be Justified and saved: as afterwards we have *Pharach* set forth as a lively type of those who shall be rejected by God, namely, such as slight and reject God and his long-suffering grace in the Gospel, which ought and is expected to leade them to repentance, *Rom.* 2. 2.

This Doctrine from hence may be observed.

Doctrine, *That God in chooſing and reprobating man hath a special eye to qualifications.*

Children

Children of the flesh are not the children of God, but the children of faith in Christ; not by number and name, but *species* and qualifications, *Psal.* 4. 3. *God hath chosen and set apart for himself the man that is godly.* St. *Jude* tells us, certain men were Ordained to that condemnation, and he doth desipher them thus, *ungodly men turning the grace of God into wantonnesse, and denying the Lord*; so that *Ishmael* and *Isaac* are made use of here but allegorically, as they are, *Gal.* 4.

I shall speak but a very few words to *ver.* 9. and winde up this context with a word of Use; for this is the word of promise, *at this time will I come and* Sarah *shall have a son*; *Isaac* is judged a meet type of those who should be begotten by faith in the free and gratious promise of God in the Gospel: we have in these words contained an explanation of what is spoken before; *Isaac* was a significant son of promise, therefore the Apostle recites the very words of the Original promise to *Abraham*, *Gen.* 17. 21. *at this time next year will I return according to the time of life, and* Sarah *shall have a son*: ver. 14. *at the time appointed I will return*: the Apostle changeth by these words, *I will come*; for God to come is understood two ways,

1. To come in power to help, rescue or deliver.

2. Sometimes to come is to punish, sometimes for God or Christ to come is metaphorically understood; as *Rev.* 2. 5. his coming is to remove the Candlestick, *to come, ver* 16. is to fight against them: *chap.* 3. 3. is to come as a thief with strength and resolution: we have two things considerable in these words to *Abraham*, recited by the Apostle.

1. That *Isaac's* birth is the effect of Gods coming in power.

2. That God in fulfilling this promise admits no delay, *at this time, at the set time:* neither sooner nor later, but at the set time; as it was in the birth of *John the Baptist, Luke the* 1. *his mother went her exact time*: God makes his promise returnable at the set time, so that *Isaac's* birth is the effect of Gods coming as to his birth, and the time of it, and also the effect of Gods free promise; *Isaac* was the son of Gods word of promise: I shall sum up all in one Doctrinal conclusion.

Doctrine, *That a true child of God, and heir of glory, is one as* Isaac *was, begotten and brought forth by the strength of the free promise of God, not of his own power, strength or righteousnesse*: This our Apostle alludes unto, *Titus* 3. and 5. *not of works of righteousnes that we have done.*

I told you in the explication, that *Isaac's* birth was an act of free mercy and speciall Providence, for there was no strength in *Abraham* or *Sarah* to have a childe according to the course of nature; nothing as they could lean upon so as to have hope in themselves: therefore it is said, *Rom.* 4. that *Abraham against hope believed in hope, vers.* 18. and being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, nor yet the deadnes of *Sarah's* womb: he staggered not, but was fully perswaded that he that had promised was able to perform: and this frame of spirit God liked well in *Abraham, and it was accounted for righteousnes*; and hereupon he was called *the friend of God, James* 2. 23. *Isaac's* birth was the effect of a promise,

miſe, and faith in it: ſo was *John's*, *Luke* the 1. and what *Elizabeth* ſaid to *Mary*, is certainly true; *vers.* 45. *bleſſed is ſhe, or he that believeth*, for there ſhall be a performance of what is promiſed: a true child of God is begotten and brought forth of the promiſe of God in Chriſt, therefore believing; Holy S. *Paul* could ſay in the behalf of himſelf and the reſt of believers, *we brethren as* Iſaac, *are children of the promiſe*, that is to ſay, that as *Iſaac's* birth was the product of the free promiſe of God, ſo is our new birth: and it is a truth, that we are as weak and unable to ſave our ſelves, of our ſelves, as *Abraham* was to produce *Iſaac* of himſelf, without the mighty interpoſer: for the promiſe gives a being to Chriſt, and believing to be the means of ſalvation, *Gen.* 3. *Eſa.* 55. *I will abundantly pardon: look unto me, and be ye ſaved all the ends of the earth. Eſa.* 45. 22.

There are five inferences to be drawn from the promiſes.

1. There is no ground from the rejecting the unbelieving Jews, to conclude that there is a failing in Gods promiſes to *Abraham* and his ſeed, becauſe God did never intend a carnal ſeed in that promiſe, but a ſpiritual and believing ſeed, who ſhould ſeek for juſtification by Chriſt alone: forasmuch as *Iſaac's* birth is a type of Gods method of ſaving ſouls in all ages.

2. Learn from this context the indiſpenſable neceſſity of faith, in order to juſtification and ſalvation: if *Abraham* and *Sarah* had not ſeconded Gods promiſe by faith in it, they had had no *Iſaac*: therefore is the birth ſtrongly imputed to the faith of them both, *Heb.* 11. 11. the birth of *Iſaac* is not only a promiſe on Gods part, but believing on their part.

3. If the works of the law were rejected in point of justification, which were so labourious, painful, and costly, much less can gospel-works justifie, which in comparison are no works, *Rom.* 4. 15. therefore lean not to them.

4. If Gods children are the children of promise, that is, begotten upon the promise, then this doth instruct a gospel-minister his work and duty, which is to lay before persons Gods free promises of life and salvation in Christ: thus did *Peter* in his preaching, *Acts.* 2. *ch.* 3. *ch.* 10.

5. Admire the sweetness of Gods nature to allure by promises to Obedience, this was Gods proceedings with *Abraham*; when God would have *Abraham* to obey him, in any special service, he makes him a special promise, *Gen.* 12. 17. so that thus far the Apostle has proceeded to manage his designe in distinguishing *Abrahams* seed, to the end of the 9th verse.

CHAP. IV.

CHAP. IV.

Wherein is evidently asserted by the truth of reason, that the Apostles affirmation (Jacob have I loved and Esau hated) *could not respect in the least, either their persons or generations, as to a final saving or damning the whole posterity.*

Ver. 10. *And not only this, but when* Rebecca *also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac.*

11. *For the Children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election, might stand, not of works but of him that calleth.*

12. *It was said unto her, the elder shall serve the younger.*

13. *As it is written,* Jacob *have I loved, but* Esau *have I hated.*

THe reason why I take in all these 4 vers. is, because they all belong to make up the Apostles answer to their first objection: the Apostle is in these 4 verses still carrying on the former Argument, to take off the absurdity cast by the Jews upon *Pauls* Doctrine of free justification by faith in Christ: their objection (as I have before-shown) was this, if *Abrahams* seed be not justified and saved, then God is not so good as his word of promise to *Abraham*; but God is as good as his word, therefore *Israel* is justified, and thou *Paul* art mistaken.

To this the Apostle has been labouring in his reply

ply in the former 4 verses; and to take them off from their confident opinion of the whole seed of *Abraham*: he has been instancing in *Ishmael* and *Isaac*, one rejected, the other elected: *Ishmael* being cast out of the inheritance shews, that all *Abrahams* natural seed were not heirs of the promise: we have now in these four verses his 2d instance to the same end, from *Abraham's* familie, and that in special from *Israel's* family, the special son of promise: yet not all his fleshly seed heirs with him, though God said, *In* Isaac *shall thy seed be called.*

And since we are now entring upon the borders of the controversial part of this chapter about absolute personal election and reprobation, I shall endeavour to be as distinct, clear and plain, as possible I can, that at least what I intend and speak may have a ready access to your understandings and consciences in the sight of God.

And before I come close to the words, as an introduction to what shall be said, I would premise three or four things to be considered to prepare you to what I shall say directly to these verses.

1. I beseech you as a general rule to be observed, not ony in this, but for the right understanding of any single and difficult place of Scripture, take a diligent heed to the main drift and scope of the place in general: I am well assured (as I told you before) that there is no one thing will more conduce to a right understanding of this 9 Chap. of the *Romans*, then this thing, to know well what is the main Doctrine that S. *Paul* is designed to prove and establish, and from thence you may be assured, that all his arguments runs in a direct line to that end, for it is certain, that he was a workman

man that did not take improper tools to work with, that is to say, improper Arguments to confirm his grand *theſis*, but did anſwer by pertinent and convincing arguments.

There are two opinions, and but two, that I know of, founded upon this portion of Scripture, the one is this, that the Apoſtle in this 9 *Ch.* to the *Rom.* is inſinuating to the Jews, that their caſting off and rejection, who for many ages had been Gods peculiar people, and receiving into love and grafting in the Gentiles, was the effect of Gods eternal decree before the worlds were made; and their opinion runs thus, that thoſe whom God hath elected before time, ſhall one time or other have ſuch means of grace offered to them; as thereby without poſſibility of miſcarrying they ſhall be brought to believe, and be ſaved: and on the other hand, that thoſe who are under an eternal degree of reprobation, muſt by vertue thereof remain under impenitency and unbelief, and ſo unavoidably muſt periſh: and from this root are ſuch of the Jews (ſaith this opinion) caſt off and rejected: and without a diligent comparation of the ſeveral paſſages of this chapter, there doth appear ſome weak ground of ſuch an opinion.

The ſecond opinion upon this context, and Chapt. and Ch. 3. 4. 10. 11. is this, that the Apoſtles abſolute deſigne in the whole, is to prevent or anſwer thoſe objections which were apt to be upon the Jews hearts againſt his grand Doctrine of juſtification by faith in Chriſt, which indeed was the main Doctrine, *Chap.* 3. 4. 10 11.

Now conſider which of theſe two opinions are likelieſt to be neareſt the truth: I will give you 5. or 6. Arguments to demonſtrate, that it muſt be

the

the last and not the first, and that the rejecting of the Jews is not the effect of Gods absolute decree.

First, because their casting off is rendred as the fruit and effect of their own sin and disobedience to Christ; see *chap.* 11. and 20. *Well: because of unbelief they were broken off.*

Secondly, because their casting off is but conditionally till they turn to the Lord, and believe in Jesus Christ, *ver.*23. *they shall be grafted in again, if they abide not still in unbelief*; and that they shall so believe see *ver.*26,27,28. Now if their blinding and hardening were the fruit of Gods absolute decree, it could not be reverst again, as most will say.

3. That this could not be the Apostles designe to establish absolute personal Election, because such a doctrine would not have comported with his grand designe, to convince the Jews of their sin in rejecting Jesus Christ; such a Doctrin must run in a direct line of opposition: I argue thus; was it a likely way to convince them, to tell them, that they were necessitated to reject Christ from the power of an absolute Decree: besides the Jews had cause to judge, that the Decree of Election was on their side, rather then on the Gentiles, for they had the promises made and renewed to them from time to time: nay, it is plain, that the Jews in rejecting Jesus Christ did not answer to their predestination: See *Luke* 7.30. the Pharisees and Lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves: and S. *Peter* saith, they were disobedient to that whereunto they were appointed.

4. It is plain and clear, that a great part of this Chapter is spent in answer to their Objections against

gainſt S. *Pauls* Doctrine; which kinde of arguing was needleſſe, if his deſigne had been to exalt perſonal Election, therefore the Apoſtles deſigne is to ſet forth the nature and quality, not the number of thoſe who are the true ſeed of *Abraham*; according as he had done, *Gal.*3.29.

5. The Apoſtle himſelf in drawing up his reſult of all his Arguments, *ver.*31,32. wherein he ſhews the true and proper ground of the Jews miſcarrying, and the Gentiles obtaining, he gives not the ground to lie in a previous decree but in themſelves, becauſe they ſought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the Law.

6. Such an Election and Reprobation (meer perſonal) is neither proved in this Chapter, nor in any other part of Scripture, nor in any other part of this Epiſtle.

7. The whole current of this Chapter doth clearly correſpond to the Second Opinion, that S. *Paul* is taking off all Objections that lie in the way to contradict juſtification by faith alone, without the works of the law: Now my hearts counſel to all that would finde the truth of God in this Chapter, is to obſerve the ſcope of the Epiſtle and Chapter: and if you finde the leaſt whiſper in the whole of ſuch a perſonal and abſolute Election & Reprobation as men ſpeak of, I have loſt my ſenſe and reaſon: I will be bold to ſay, there is as much in the *Firſt of Geneſis*: and whereas you poſſibly may have the perſons of *Eſau* and *Jacob* in your eyes; I anſwer, you ſhall be forc't to conclude with me before we have done, that the inſtance of *Eſau* and *Jacob* doth not at all prove ſuch a notion of perſonal Election or Reprobation, to life or death eternal.

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The Second thing which I would premiſe in order to clearing our way, is to know that the Apoſtle in theſe four *verſes*, 10,11,12,13. is ſtill carrying on the ſame deſigne as he was in the four former *verſes*, which was to point out the true ſeed of *Abraham* by their qualifications, not name or number: and know this, that as God before had been declaring his minde more darkly, in the inſtance of *Iſhmael* and *Iſaac*, ſo he is now proceeding more clearly in this inſtance of *Eſau* and *Iacob*; and that he is proſecuting the ſame matter in hand, is or may be perceived from two circumſtances.

1. From the manner of ſpeaking, in the firſt words, *and not only this*, which kinde of explanatory ſpeaking doth note a further proſecution of the ſame matter; as it is uſed elſewhere; See *Rom.*5. 3.11. *chap.*8.23. where this kinde of ſpeaking, *and not only ſo*, is ſo uſed.

2. That the Apoſtle is carrying on the ſame Argument, appears from his mending and ſtrengthning his Argument, for as to his former argument and inſtance of *Iſaac* and *Iſhmael*, the Jews might object ſomething as to the father, the mother, and the childe.

1. *Iſhmael* was begotten before circumciſion was commanded.

2. Of a bond-woman and *Abrahams* ſervant *Hagar*.

3. He diſcovered himſelf in matter of fact; *he mocked* Iſaac, and therefore no marvel though he was rejected, and yet the word to *Abraham* might be ſtill ſtedfaſt; therefore he doth herein preſent an inſtance without exception:

1. Of *Eſau* that was begotten in Circumciſion.

2. Of him in whom the promiſes were more immediatly

mediatly lodged, *In* Isaac *shall thy seed be called.*

3. Of a religious godly praying mother, the sought God presently in the case.

4. Those children were twins, both begotten at one and the same time.

5. Neither was there any difference made by good or bad actions on either side, for it was said to *Rebecca*, *before they had done good or evil*, saith our Text.

Yet 6. the Lord tells *Rebecca* then, that *the elder should serve the younger*: one of these two equals are hated: so then it is plain that the Apostle in these *verses* is still upon the same Argument, and truly the clear sight hereof doth much conrribute to a right understanding of the whole controversy; for some thinking that the Apostle in *ver.* the 10. is entring upon a new matter, have lost themselves, and have been involved in great darkness as to this whole context; therefore I pray remember that the Apostle is still upon the same Argument, that he was in the 4 former *verses*.

The 3*d* thing premised, to clear our way to the text is this, and it is undenyably plain, that what is by God spoken to *Rebecca*, as to these two persons, *Jacob* and *Esau*, is not spoken as to them in a personal capacity, but as to them, and of them, as heads of two nations: for this see that text, *Genesis* 25. 23. not one word in that original text of *Jacob* and *Esau* as single persons, but four times expresst as nations and people: *two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels: and the one people shall be stronger then the other people*; four times expresst: So also in that prophecy recited by the Apostle out of *Malachi*, as it is written, *Jacob I have loved, Esau* have

have I hated, *chap.* 1. *ver.* 2. 3, 4. It is plain, that it is not *Iacob* nor *Esau* in person to be understood, as doth easily appear to those that will but reade and consider; in that it is all along rendred in the plural: *Edom* said, *we are impoverisht*, but *we will build*, and they shall be called, the people against whom *God* hath indignation; so that love and hatred in our text cannot be applyed to those two single persons in *Rebecca's* womb, in a single capacity; but some may object, doth not our Apostle in our text *ver.* 11. call them children? I answer, No, there is no such word as *children* in the Original: it is a corruption to accommodate their private opinion, who so rendred it: It is rendred only thus; *before they were born*: and if they would have had honesty supply'd the place, they should have in the room of children supply'd *nations*, which would have answered to the Original text, *Gen.* 25. *two nations are in thy womb*: so that it is very plain from hence, that *Jacob* and *Esau* are not here propounded as types of a meer personal election and Reprobation, but as to a specifial National election and Reprobation, it bespeaks a laying low a certain sort of people who did not fall in with God in his designe through Christ, although they were the elder, as the covenant of works was elder then that of grace, neither were these words of God to *Rebecca*, *the Major shall serve the Minor*, ever fulfilled in *Jacob* and *Esau* personally, but *Jacob* stooped to *Esau*, cal'd him Lord, *Gen.* 32. how often doth he pay homage to *Esau* personally: So that this love or hatred was never manifested to them in person, whilst they lived, the fourth thing I premise to prepare our way to the Text is this, that whatever is here spoken by *God*

or

or by the Apostle concerning *Jacob* or *Esau*, either as to them or their generations, is not spoken as to their final and eternal estate; neither can any man from these Texts conclude by what is said, that *Esau* is damned or *Jacob* saved: may it hath been the general Opinion of the ancient Fathers (so called) that *Esau* in person is saved: so hold (*Moler. Occolampad. Estius, Jerome, Augustin, Anselm*, and many more: and a later Writer, a man of high esteem with most of the reformed Protestants, saith, he doth not remember that ever he read any Authour that was of Opinion that *Esau* was damned, but rather the contrary; and several gives these reasons for their belief of the contrary.

As 1. That he was fully reconciled to his brother *Jacob*, notwithstanding the occasion offered of offence by *Iacob*, this appears *Gen.* 33.

2. He joyned with him in the burial, *cha.* 35. *ult.*

3. Say they, he dyed in the true religion: against this some, not for want of ignorance, objects, the Apostles calling him a prophane person, *Heb.* 12. and that he could not obtain repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears: to which I answer.

1. That he was prophane at that time in that act, and so was out of Gods favour.

2. As to Repentance it hath respect to his father not himself; he could not make his father repent or reverse his blessing given to *Iacob*, as is plain *Gen.* 27. 33. *I have blessed him and he shall be blessed*; he could not recal it again: besides, its plain, that many of *Esau's* posterity were Godly: It is the general Opinion of the learned, that holy *Iob* was of *Esau's* race, and was that *Iobab* of whom we read *Gen.* 36. 33. and it is strange, that any should imagine

gine from what is said, *the elder shall serve the younger*, to conclude, them saved or damned: is servitude and damnation taken one for another? may not a servant be a happy man when his master is in a miserable estate as to his inward condition? I will give you a saying of Bishop *Hooper* a Martyr in *Queen Mary's* days, *Cain* was no more excluded by God till he excluded himself then *Abel*, nor *Saul* then *David*, nor *Judas* then *Peter*, nor *Esau* then *Iacob*; and further he saith, as to the Text in hand, that the threatning of God against *Esau*, is no more of necessity to be executed then his threatning was against *Niniveh*: It were strange if what God said (*Isay*) to *Rebecca*, should be so understood of their final estate, especially on the left hand; It was never Gods way to declare the final state of persons: set this instance aside, where shall we finde any like it? would God declare such a dreadful prediction to that godly mother, in answer of her pathetical prayer to God, to know the ground of that *Rebecca*'s strange strugling in her Womb: as to tell her, one of those two she now went with, should be hated of God, and damned to all eternity; this had been enough to cause an untimely birth, like *Elies* daughter: what sad parents had *Isaac* and *Rebecca* been, if they had so understood that Oracle? besides, of what use could such a prediction be to themselves or any body else, to understand the unavoidable destiny of their children this way? would not the consequence be sad? and well might it beget in the parents hard thoughts of God; and despair in the children: whereas *Esau* as well as *Iacob* was given in as the answer of 20 years prayer by *Isaac*; therefore it cannot be rationally supposed, that they understood

ſtood God in this Oracle.

5. *I* premiſe, that though our Text ſeems to intimate, that when the threatning was given out, there was no good on the one hand, nor evil on the other; yet when the threatning was executed, there was evil enough for which it was executed: ſee *Obadiah ver.* 10. for his hatred and cruelty againſt his brother *Iacob*.

Now we proceed to the words more cloſely as they lye in theſe four *verſes*, which contains the Apoſtles ſecond inſtance or example given, tending to ſtrengthen and confirm his former poſition, which was, that God did not take to himſelf the whole off-ſpring of *Abraham*, which did naturally proceed from his loyns, but ſuch as ſhould fall in with his deſigne in Chriſt.

I ſhall reduce this inſtance and its circumſtances into theſe two parts.

1. The ſubjects.
2. The predicate.

1. The ſubjects in this Inſtance are, *Iacob* and *Eſaus*.

2. The predicate or what is ſpoken of them or reſpecting them, which we have in ſix circumſtances.

1. Their parentage; which is *Iſaac* and *Rebecca*.

2. We have their future ſtate and portion, in theſe words, *the elder ſhall ſerve the younger*: or the *Major* the *Minor*.

3. The time when this Oracle was declared, and that we have under a double circumſtance.

1. *Before they were born or brought forth.*

2. Whilſt both were innocent, having done neither good nor evil.

4. The person to whom this was spoken, and that was to *Rebecca*, a godly woman, and that in answer of prayer: as we may see *Gen.*25.

5. We have the reason that is rendred why it is thus said of these Nations, upon a double ground.

1. In excluding *Esau* he excludes works, not of *works*.

2. By loving or choosing *Iacob*, he therein declareth his choosing faith and free grace in the Gospel for salvation.

6. We have an exposition or interpretation of the former servitude and dominion by love and hatred to each.

Of each of these a very brief word in Order.

And first, I shall speak of the subjects of this instance, which are *Iacob* and *Esau*, whose names are significant: *Esau* according to the Hebrew signifieth *doing* or *working*, and the reason is given, because *Esau* came forth at his birth not as a weak and tender infant, but as a strong grown person, all over hairy like a hairy garment.

The Hebrew word translated *Iacob* signifieth a *Supplanter* or *deceiver*: some renders his name *heel* or *footstep*, because he took his brother by the heel, puld him back, and got before him: *Hos.*12. And as his name is changed, it signified a *prince* or *strong prevailer*: these two were twins, begotten and born at once: their birth was one continued birth: *Jacob* holding his brother by the heel, as one saith of them, they were like one long childe born at once; yet because *Esau* appeared first, he is called the first born and elder brother, *Gen.*27.32. these children (as I have shewn you) were both in an even and equal capacity, one father, one mother, one birth. Now these two children are only

represented

represented in the Oracle to *Rebecca* as typical and allegorical: God made use of *Esau* as a type and representation of all the cruel and bloudy persecutors in all ages of the World, they are in all ages called after his name, *Esau* and *Edom*: whereas the faithful in all ages carries away the name of *Iacob* and *Israel*: the seed of *Iacob*, the *Israel* of God, even in Gospel days; as I have shewn before.

So that *Iacob* and *Esau* are the two great fathers typically; they are not spoken of in the Oracle to *Rebecca* as distinct persons, but as to each race: see that prophecy that points at that very day of Christs 2d coming, *Obadiah*, 21. *and saviours shall come upon* Zion *to judge the mount of* Esau, *and the kingdome shall be the Lords*: and in that day the house of *Iacob* shall be a fire, *ver.* 18.

2ly, They are not only typically but alligorically, that is, as it is interpreted by our Apostle, *Gal.*4.24. that is, when by one thing another different thing is meant; so we have *Isaac* and *Ishmael*, an allegory of the two covenants, the legal from Mount *Sinai*, and the other that which is by Christ: and as those two sons of *Abraham* were allegorical, so these two sons of *Isaac* must be also: if we understand the Apostle in the present text, giving a new instance to the same end and import with the former: now as God in ordering *Ishmael* and his mother to be cast out, did therein figure out the rejecting of the law of works as to justification; so did he corroborate and strengthen that signification in this second instance of *Esau*, which appears plain in our text, where he saith, *not of works but of the caller*; so that the covenant of works is rejected in casting out *Ishmael*, and hating *Esau*; so that it

is plain, that God will have none accepted or received for the legitimate ſeed of *Abraham* nor *Iſaac*, that ſeeks to be juſtified by works; this way is reprobated, and thus found in it: and that this point is that which the Apoſtle would prove to this people ſee *Rom.* 3. *for by the deeds of the law ſhall no fleſh be juſtified in his ſight*: ſo *vers.* 28. the promiſe to *Abraham*, that *he ſhould be heir of the world*, was not through the law, but through faith, *Rom.* 4. 13. *we are all the children of God by faith in Chriſt Jeſus.*

So that this is a great truth, that reprobation and election is of works and faith.

2. That *Eſau* was only a type and repreſentation of all wicked men, in all ages, but alſo of the law of works.

The next thing that I am to ſpeak unto, is, the parentage of theſe ſubjects *Jacob* and *Eſau*; their father was *Iſaac*, their mother was *Rebecca*: both godly, praying, holy perſons; we may gather that *Iſaac* was near 20 years praying to God that he might have children, and ſo much the more earneſtly, becauſe the ſpeciall promiſe of God was lodged in him: *in* Iſaac *ſhall thy ſeed be called*, ſaith God to *Abraham*: and when *Iſaac* ſaw, that this promiſe ſtuck in the birth, and did not come forward, he ſet himſelf in good earneſt to ſeek God, the text ſaith, *he entreated* the Lord, which word ſignifieth earneſt importuning prayer; and the text alſo ſaith, *Gen* 25. 22. *the Lord was entreated*: ſo that to thoſe parents, theſe children were the anſwer of earneſt prayer; theſe were children of one father, and mother, and twins; yet ſee what a great difference there was in their natures, before and after their birth. *Jacob* was a plain man, *Eſau*

took

took like *Nimrod*, of whom it is ſaid, *Gen.* 10. 9. *that he was a mighty hunter before the Lord*, or as ſome reade, *of the Lord*, that is to ſay, *a great perſecutor*: to which alſo *Eſau* in his poſterity anſwered: *Eſau* was the head of the *Edomites*, and as theſe differed much in their nature and civil ſtate, ſo alſo in their moral ſtate: *Eſau* is ſtiled *a prophane perſon*, one that ſlighted ſpirituall things, as they were contained in his birth-right; I am at the point to dye, and what good will this birth-right do to me?

We may note by the way, *that very godly perſons may have a great difference in their children, and very bad children in anſwer of prayer*: this was the caſe with *Iſaac* and *Rebecca*; let not godly parents think ſtrange of this, it was ſo here: but have a care you do not impute their badneſs to be the effect of an abſolute decree of God, as ſome are ready to do; and ſuch an opinion is the direct way to diſcourage parents from taking pains with their children.

2. Have a care of ſetting your love to much upon your children, the child that *Iſaac* loved beſt proved worſt; it is recorded, *Gen.* 25. that *Iſaac loved Eſau*; it was obſerved by a godly man having occaſion to ſpeak of *Barabbas* a wicked man, that he carried a ſignificant name; *Bar-abbas* the ſon of the father; that it was to be feared, that his father too much loved him, which was one means to ſpoyl him; what a croſs and vexation was *Eſau* to his father and mother in his marriage? *Gen.* 26. but I paſs this briefly.

CHAP. V.

Plainly evidencing, that the salvation of mankinde was the subject of Gods heart, thoughts, and purposes, from the beginning.

WE now proceed to the predicate, the oracle it self, spoken of these children, which was, *the elder shall serve the younger*; which words were the words of God himself spoken to *Rebecca* in answer of prayer; *Rebecca* in much perplexity of minde about the strange strugling in her womb, inquires of God, who gives her this answer, as a prophetical prediction of their future condition in their posterity's, which God foresaw was like to be, not as if this foresight did necessitate its coming to pass: no, *Austin* long since layd down a Maxim in this case, which is this, that Gods foresight of things coming to pass, doth not necessitate their coming to pass; it must be granted in this as well as in the other cases, that those things which God foresees will come to pass, doth admit of a condition in the case, as it is plain, 1 *Sam.*23. which is a remarkable place to that purpose, where *David* in his flight before *Saul* was in *Keilah*, and afraid *Saul* would surprise him there, he goes to God to enquire.

1. Whether *Saul* would indeed come to that place.

2. Whether the men of the place would deliver him up: to both which God gives a positive answer in the affirmative.

1. *Saul*

1. *Saul* will come.

2. The men of the place will deliver him up, yet neither the one, nor the other came to pass; for when *David* understood that *Saul* would come, he hasted and got away: so also in *Nineveh* case, 40 *days* (saith the prophet) *and it shall be destroyed*; yet it was not: so though God foresaw the servitude of *Esaus* posterity, for it was not fulfilled in person (as I have said) yet this is executed upon just grounds of defert, *Obadiah* 10. *Psalm.* 137. if the question should be demanded, when this oracle takes place? I have answered already: we finde the first fruits of this servitude in *Davids* time, as we reade 2 *Sam.* 8. 14. 1 *Cronicles* 18. when *David* put garisons into *Edom*, and made them tributaries to him; but it shall be more fully accomplished in the time to come; see *Isaac's* blessing to *Jacob* by faith, as it is recorded of him, *Heb.* 11. *by faith* Isaac *blessed* Jacob, *as to things to come*: and see what it is *Gen.* 27. 29. *let people serve thee and nations bow down to thee, and be Lord over thy brethren*: this is spoken of *Jacobs* posterity, not *Jacob* in person; this *Balaam* also by a prophetical spirit foresaw, *Numb.* 24. *out of* Jacob *shall come him that shall have the dominion*, that is, *his seed*: *the righteous shall have Dominion in the morning*. *Psal.* 29. 14. so that this oracle spoken to *Rebecca*, is yet to be fulfilled, as in the one part so in the other; *when saviours shall come upon* Mount Zion *to judge the mount of* Esau: *when the kingdom shall be the Lords*: this may be an encouraging consideration to all the true seed of *Jacob*, this oracle of God shall certainly be fulfilled, *Esau* shall serve *Iacob*.

2. From hence we may see and learn, how dark many times God is in his footsteps, contrary to his own

own order: that the elder should rule, and have the primogaritorship, yet here it is contrary: God can dispence with his ceremonical and judicial law, and all to promote the interest of his grace to true believers, the seed of *Iacob*. I shall shew you how this oracle of God carries in it also a mistical sence: It is the judgment of most later interpreters, that by the elder serving the younger, in this passage, is understood the elder covenant of works must stoop to the covenant of grace; and that it must be so understood, I shall shew you upon a fourfold consideration, that the elder covenant must stoop and bow to the younger, which appears clearly thus,

1. As the type and shadow is subordinate to the antytipe and shadow; for this is granted on all hands, that the ceremonies of the law were but shadows of good things to come in the Gospel.

2. This appears, because the most exact and strict *Iudesaries*, such as S. *Paul* himself, was forc't to deny all such their ceremonial and legal obedience, and make them all stoop to the dispensation of Christ and the Gospel: see this, *Phil.* 3. though he was possest with as many & great priviledges in and from the law as any ever was, yet he counts them all as dung in comparison of Christ: he calls all these accomplishments but his own, *righteousness of the law*.

3. The great minister of the whole dispensation of the law, is but a servant to Christ the great minister of the Gospel: and the whole ministration of the Gospel, is called *the ministration of the spirit*; whereas the law is called the letter: *Moses was faithful in all his house as a servant, Heb.* 3. 5. but Christ as a Son.

4. The

4. The elder Covenant ſtoops to and gives way to the younger and laſt by courſe, as is uſuall in all Covenants or Teſtaments; if a man makes 20. Wills or Teſtaments the laſt muſt ſtand; the death of the Teſtator confirms the laſt; thus the elder ſerving the younger is intended further then is ſpoken of *Eſau* and his poſterity, God in that Oracle intended the ſubjugating the law to the Goſpel, and thus conſidered it doth much contribute to the Apoſtles argument of Juſtification *by faith without the works of the law.*

We now proceed to the third Circumſtance to be ſpoken unto as to the predicate, or that ſpoken of the ſubject *Jacob* and *Eſau*, which refers to the circumſtance of time under a double conſideration.

1. It was ſpoken to them before they were born.

2. Before they had done either good or evil, that is, whilſt they were in a paſſive ſtate;

And becauſe we have our fifth particular laid down to be handled, contained in this *11th verſe* alſo, I ſhall invert my order, and handle in the *4th* place, the reaſon why this ſpeech is ſpoken the ſecond time to *Rebecca*, as the firſt was to *Abraham*, *In* Iſaac *ſhall thy ſeed be called*; ſo here again to *Rebecca* in reſpect to *Jacob*; this doubling the ſpeech doth ſhew the certainty of the fulfilling, as in like caſe in *Pharaohs* two dreams *of the lean cattel and thin ears*, *Gen.*41.32. this whole 11. *verſe* in moſt readings is included in a parentheſis, and in ſome we have only the latter part, *that the purpoſe of God according to election might ſtand*, ſo the Vulgar Latin reades it; and ſo the Church of *England* in their Old Tranſlations, this

11th

11th verse may be left out, and the sense remain good; yet because I finde this *11th verse* in the greek all, except the word *children*, which is not; but forasmuch as I take these words as well as the rest to be a part of our Apostles words, I shall take notice of the whole verse; but these words admits of several readings: Some reade, *that the purpose of God concerning Election, which is not of works, but of him that calleth, might stand or remain*: Some reade *not for works*; Some reade *not of works, but of the caller*: Others reade, *that the purpose of Gods election might not be of works, but of faith, whereby he obeyeth him that calleth*: this last reading seems most clear and coherent to the Context; but there is no material difference in their reading, they all amount to thus much, that these Oracles of God reiterated, doth pathetically teach, Gods Elect way of adopting children to *Abraham*, is not by works of the law, but by the free-grace arising from the heart of God through Jesus Christ;

But before I speak to the words as they lie, I would speak something by way of Explication of four terms in these verses.

1. What we are to understand by the purpose of God, and the time when they do commence.
2. What by Election.
3. What by works.
4. Who is here intended by the caller, and why opposed to works, as elsewhere to faith.

1. By *purpose*, as in man so in God, a firm thought and resolution of minde, a determination touching what a person intends to do, and under this consideration the redemption of mankinde by the death of Christ was purposed before the foundation of the world: thus God the Father did pur-

pose

pose to elect all that should be found in his Son, See *Eph.*1.4. *chosen us in him before the foundation of the world*; and *cha.*3.11. *according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Iesus our Lord.*

2. As to this word translated *Election*, used both in Old and New Testament, in the Hebrew it signifieth *to prove, try, examine*; because chooſing is first by trying; thus the word is to be understood, *Prov.*7.3. *the Lord trieth, chooseth or electeth the hearts*: thus the word is to be understood, *Esa.*48. 10. *I have chosen*, or *elected*, or *tried*, or *proved thee in the furnace of affliction.* Thus Souldiers that had been trained for war were called *chosen men, tried men*: In this sence is the Apostle *Peter* to be understood, 1 *Pet.*2. Christ is called *elect* or *tried stone*; sometimes it signifieth *chief, best, most honourable*, Exod.14. *chosen chariots*: thus we reade *as choice vows*, Deut.12.11. Thus the Hebrew word is not always to be understood *Election* as is opposed to *rejection*, but a person or a thing of high valuation and esteem may be said to be choice or elect, and we our selves so use it: we are apt to say this or that is a choice thing, not supposing rejection; all election doth not suppose rejection; so the greek word ἐκλεκτὸς, as *Hugo Grotius* tells us, is taken for *probation*, to prefer one above another, and so to chooſe in that sence: and so it is understood *Deut.*7.6. *the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself above all people that are upon the face of the earth*: So *Deut.*10.15. *God did chooſe them above all people*: So *Prov.*1.29. *because they did not chooſe the fear of the Lord*, that is, prefer that: so that Election doth not always suppose Rejection, but when persons prefer one thing above another. Dr *Hammond* tells us, that

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the Greek words used in *Rev.* 17. 14. called *chosen, faithfull*, are joyned together as words of the same import: Election and faith seems to be taken one for another; and should we reade faith for election in these places following, it would not sound incongruously, that the *purpose of God according to faith might stand*, v. 11. *is not of works*. So *chap.* 11. 5. *there is a remnant according to the faith of grace*: So *ver.* 7. *Israel hath not obtained, but the believers have obtained, and the rest were blinded*, which reading doth very well agree to v. 32. of this Chapter.

3. What works are here excluded whilst he saith, *not of works*? To this I answer, they must needs intend those works which the Jews gloried in, a circumcision and keeping the law, which works are distinguished from, and opposed to faith in Christ, *Rom.* 4. 5. *now to him that worketh not, but believeth in him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousnesse.*

3. Who is here intended by the *caller, in him that calleth*: I answer, it is plain, that God is the *caller*, he is the free inviter to that great feast of Justification and salvation; see *Luke* 14. *Mat.* 22. *It is of him freely prepared*, and he hath an undoubted right to propound the terms in order to participation of it, therefore are works here opposed to him that calleth, or to the caller.

That which I am to speak unto in the next place, is the time when the Oracle was delivered to *Rebecca*, recited by the Apostle; it was when *these nations had not works either good or evil*, but in an equal condition; then were these words spoken: God took such a time to declare it; and doubtlesse our Apostle doth judge this circumstance of time obser-

observable, as to his controversy in hand: this relation of our Apostle many do greatly wrest contrary to the Apostles intent and meaning, as I shall make plain; though it must be granted, that the Apostle in this his contention doth as we do sometimes by a crooked stick, bend it quite the other way, to the end he might set it right: so here doth the Apostle decry works, because they too much rested upon them: but I shall afterwards show you, that by all he saith, he doth not altogether trample upon them; though at first sight his speaking seems to give encouragement to such an Opinion: some from these words do urge, that as *Esau* is here rejected, so are men by name without the least regard had to works, either good or evil: and that men are hated, rejected, chosen, elected, meerly according to the pleasure of Gods own will: to which notion we comply thus far, that the gift of salvation, and the terms thereof doth arise out of the heart of God, it is freely from the caller, neither men nor Angels could propound him way or rules herein to go by.

But for the discharging this opinion, we must understand, that it is founded upon a mistaken foundation about Gods election; the authors of that personal and absolute election takes it for grant, that Gods choyce is out of the fallen lump of mankinde: in *Adam*, as they were all equally fallen in him and run in debt to God, beyond any possibility to pay, and so God being the great creditour, may at his pleasure pardon one, and exact the whole debt of another, without the least blemish to his justice: now this is a fundamental mistake, for God doth neither elect nor reject any as immediately lying in the fall; but mankinde by

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the promise, gift, and death of Christ are put into another capacity of liberty and freedome; as Christ is the surety, ransome and propitiatory sacrifice, not for a few, but for all the fallen lump of mankinde: this was prophecied by the prophet, *Esa.* 53. *the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all:* he is *the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the World*, John 1. 29. *a ransom for all*, 1 Timothy 2. 6. *a propitiation for the sin of the whole world*, 1 *John* 2. 2. so that now by Christ the prison-doors are set open, God is reconciled; so that now the condemnation of man doth not lye upon *Adams* transgression, that is, as to the second death with torment; but for rejecting this sacrifice, not believing in Christ, not coming to him for life in whom it is, 1 *John* 5. this was emphatically typed out in the brazen serpent, of which Christ is the antitype, *John* 3. the people dyed not, because they were stung but for not looking upon that serpent on the pole: and thus our Lord applies it, *John* 3. 17, 18, 19. *this is the condemnation, that men love darkness rather then light.* So that all that are now elected to life, are chosen in Christ, not from *Adam*; now in this remove from *Adam* to Christ men are condemned for not believing, and for not obeying, so that salvation and damnation are conditional, which were very improper, if the former notion were true: see throughout the whole Scriptures, from the beginning of *Genesis* to the end of the *Revelations.*

Such a notion of Gods electing and destroying men without respect to their deeds, good or evil, is contradicted: begin with *Cain*, *Gen.* 4. 7. *if thou dost well, shalt thou not be accepted? Levit.* 26. *I will walk contrary to you, if you walk contrary to me.* *Deut.* 28.

Deut. 28. *the blessings upon the obedient and curses upon the disobedient*, *Psa.* 62. *Esa.* 3. 10. *Say ye to the righteous, it shall go well with him*, *Rom.* 2. 6. *who shall render to every man according to his deeds, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil*; and the contrary to them that worketh good; and the reason is given, *there is no respect of persons with God*: and this is confirmed from the righteousnesse of God, *Gen.* 18. *Shall not the judge of all the earth do right*? that is, not to make them equals in punishment, who are not equal in guilt, *to slay the righteous with the wicked*: this is the voice of the Scriptures throughout: therefore to make such an application from our Text as before, is contradictory to the analogy of Scriptures.

But that we may come to a clear and right understanding of the minde of God in these words of S. *Paul*, I shall lay down some Rules to consider of in order thereunto.

1. Know that these works principally heeded in these nations or people, must be intended the works of Circumcision and legal obedience, and not the works of faith and holinesse: in this sence the one had not then obliged himself to the worship of God, nor the other turned to Idolatry: when these words were spoken God did neither for works foredone nor foreseen of that kinde respect or disrespect; for in this both Jew and Gentile are laid levell; the Jew is no better, nor the Gentile no worse upon this account; *neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth*: this allegation of the Apostle in this place, as to the time of this Oracle, doth designe the humbling and silencing the Jew, who entertained two false Opinions of their state.

1. That God designed the whole posterity of *Abraham* for the seed.

2. That they above all other people and nations of the world did deserve this signal favour from their works of legal righteousnesse: Now the latter of these their conceits doth the Apostle strike at in these words; for in effect, (saith he) God did not choose *Jacob* nor *Abraham* into this favour to be the head of the faithful, upon the account of their works of this kinde; therefore *Abraham* is pronounced justified before he is circumcised, Rom. 4.13. *the promise to* Abraham *that he should be heir of the world, was not made through the law, but through the righteousnesse of faith.*

The Second Rule I offer is this, that what is in this Oracle to *Rebecca* must not be understood to determine the final and eternal state of them, or men; as I have shewn you before: It is true, God hath sometimes (as to some) taken liberty of disposing of mens temporal estates and conditions, without any respect to their righteousnesse or unrighteousnesse, to dispose to a person lesse godly riches and rule, whilest a person more godly is subjected to servitude and poverty; sometimes persons equal in godlinesse have very unequal portions in the world: for as *Solomon* saith, *Eccles.* 9. *there is neither love nor hatred seen in these things*, that is, no distinguishing or eternal love seen in them. God (I say) doth sometimes take this liberty to dispence of outward things without respect to good or bad works, but God doth not promise or give life and glory so promiscuously without any respect to terms of obedience: before your children are born or have done good or evil, it may be said, one shall be rich the other poor;

poor, or may be a servant to the other, as many times it is, and there is some appearance of love in these things; whilst God given *Jacobs* posterity the land of *Canaan*, a land flowing with milk and honey, and giveth to the posterity of *Esau* the barren scraggy mountains, places of mount *Seir*; but this is not an infallible character of their goodnesse or badnesse as to works, yet it must needs be granted, that there was more manifestation of *love* and *hatred* in these things under the law then under the gospel; and sometimes the posterity of *Jacob* were hated as well as *Esau*, *Ier.* 12.8. *Esa.* 60.15. so that by *love* and *hatred* we are not bound to understand it here of their final and eternal state, but thus; that God without any respect to works of legal obedience, gave *Iacob* in his posterity *rule*, and without any respect to *Esau's* idolatry, *servitude*; and what is this to their eternal state after death? but God when he dispenceth life and death eternal, renders a reason, and we finde conditions propounded as to life and death.

Now we proceed to the Fourth Circumstance to be handled, which is, the ground and reason rendred by the Apostle why God chooseth such a time to speak to *Rebecca*, before the children or nations were born, or before they had done good or evil, which we have in these words, *that the purpose of God according to election might stand or abide, not by works but by the caller*: I have already spoke to these terms by way of explication, as the word *purpose*, *election*, and *works*; so that the Apostle doth understand that the ground of this saying to *Rebecca*, *and at such a time*, was to declare to the world, that he would exclude works in point of justification (*not of works*) and bring in faith: The

Apostle to the end he might assert this great truth to the greatest advantage, lays it down both negatively and affirmatively, *not of works but of the caller*; I designe much brevity in the following part of this paragraph, therefore I shall sum up what remains to be spoken to this verse, into six Doctrinal Conclusions.

First Doctrine, *That many of Gods sayings of old, besides their literal sence and proper signification, had a further respect even to things to come.*

What God said to *Abraham* about his excluding *Ishmael* from his Family and heirship, besides the reality of it to him, had a further signification; it was allegorical, as the Apostle saith, *Gal.* 4. 24. these two sons of *Abraham* type out the two Covenants, *Law* and *Gospel*, the rejection of *Esau* held forth the same, the truth of this Doctrine.

I may prove from a hundred places of Scripture if need were. When God appointed *Noah* to make an ark for the saving himself and his house, there was more in it, 1 *Peter.* 3. when God appointed his people, *that they should not muzzle the mouth of the oxe that treadeth out the corn*; besides the literall sence, he had an eye to Gospel-ministers maintenance; See for that 1 *Cor.* 9. 9. 10. *it was* (saith he) *spoken for our sakes*: all these passages of Gods providences to *Israel* are also teaching to us: Gods depriving of *Esaus* posterity of the land of *Canaan*, was significant of Gods depriving his elder people of the antitype thereof, because *they sought it not by faith*, but as it were *by the works of the law*. Learn from hence thus much:

1. Admire

1. Admire the depth and riches of the Scriptures of the old testament.

2. Be cautioned however of turning Scriptures into allegories, contrary to the scope and current of them.

Second Doctrine is this, *That the repetition and second relation of the same things by God, though under different instances and figures, doth greatly demonstrate the certainty of those things.*

We have two instances in this context to the same end, (as I have largely proved before;) and both brought to demonstrate the same thing in the antitype, to shew the stability of Gods purpose of election, whom, or what kinde of persons he would purpose to choose: the two differing dreams of *Pharoah*, of the cattel and corn, did teach the certainty of the seven years of famine and scarcity, *Gen.* 41. 32.

Third Doctrine, *That the salvation of mankinde was the subjects of Gods heart, thoughts and purposes from the beginning.*

Gods thoughts and purposes was to provide a way to make men happy from the beginning, even before the foundation of the world, therefore the Apostle speaks of *Gods eternal purpose Eph.* 3. 11. 2 *Timothy* 1. 9. which purpose of his was his designe, contrivance and determination for the saving of lost man, God had strong thoughts of heart this way, as appears by his early promise and timely sending Jesus Christ, to that end that men might be redeemed.

This consideration may work admiration in us, and in the hearts of the sons of men, that God who is so high should remember us; it is more for God to remember us then to do for us; to bear us upon his heart in his purposes and designes; this is an unspeakable high favour. See how the psalmist takes notice of it, *Psal.* 136. 23. *who remembred us in our low estate*, or, as it may be read, *thought upon us*: *Psal.* 40. 17. *but I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me*; and *vers.* 5th. *how wonderful are thy thoughts to uswards, they cannot be reckoned up in order before thee*: or as *Ainsworth*, *thy thoughts, purposes and good meanings none can count*: or as the *chaldee*; *it is not possible to order thy praise.*

Fourth Doctrine, *God is very stable in all his purposes, and amongst all his purposes in none more stable, then that purpose respecting the way and terms of mens salvation.*

Gods election and reprobation lyeth upon most certain and unalterable terms, they are as certain as God himself; therefore it is here said, to stand remain, abide, that is to say, God hath infallibly determined, that justification and savation shall come in by faith in Christ, and no other way, *Act.* 4. *there is no name under heaven whereby men may be saved but by Christ*: this 4th Doctrine I shall but touch, because they are more remote, and be more large upon the two last.

Fifth

Fifth Doctrine, *That God hath absolutely purposed and determined, and is resolved, that justification and salvation shall not be by works.* Gods purpose of election is not according to works.

As to this Doctrine I shall take liberty to speak a few words.

1. More particularly to distinguish of works.

2. Shew you how the Scriptures doth concur with this truth.

3. Reconcile those Scriptures that seem to contradict this truth.

4. Give you some reasons why works cannot justify.

5. Shew you what this may teach us, and I will be very brief in each of these.

1. As to works we must understand them according as this our Apostle declares in the scope of this Epistle with that of the *Galathians*, which works are frequently referred to circumcision and legal obedience, as in opposition to faith; thus it is understood. *Romans* 4. 1. sometimes works in opposition to grace, *chap.* 11. 6.

2. That other Scriptures doth concur herewith, that works doth not justifie in whole or in part, see *Rom.* 3. *we conclude a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law*, Gal. 2. 16. *not of works* Eph. 2. *not of works lest any man should boast*, Titus 3. 5. *not of works of righteousness that we have done*: Thus Scriptures do willingly offer their testimony to the truth in our text, *that the purpose of Gods election might stand, not of works.*

But 3dly, doth not some Scriptures seem to speak otherways, as *Rom.* 2. 13. *not the hearers of*

the law are just, but the doers of the law are justified: and see how S. *James* argueth *chap.* 2. *was not* Abraham *our father justified by works when he offered Isaac?* doth not these Scriptures seem to cross this Doctrine?

In order to reconciling which Scriptures I answer:

There are two circumstances in works, let them be of what sort they will, if present, that will render all works unacceptable and unserviceable.

1. When they are meerly external, without heart and soul.

2. When performed with a conceit of merit.

1. When there is only the external part, see *Rom.* 2. 28. *he is not a Jew that is one outwardly*; the same may be said of all works whatsoever.

2ly, When our services to Godward are lookt upon as meritorious, and so we take justification and salvation as a compensation or suitable reward for our work, now this destroys grace; for if we work for wages, there is no place for grace: but

2. In order to reconciling these Scriptures, I answer, that works are never rejected of God when mixed with faith, as *Abrahams* was in offering his son, *Heb.* 11. works are then in their right place when they are subservient to demonstrate the truth and life of our faith, *James* 2. (as one saith) though works do not justifie, yet works doth demonstrate, that we are justified: why cannot works justifie simply considered?

1. From the imperfections attending the best works.

2. They are no more then what we owe to our soveraign Lord; and when we have done all, we

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have done no more then our duty is to do.

3. Because God is not profited, we are as to him *unprofitable servants, Luke* 17. so that God may well purpose, that salvation shall not come in this way; but have a care, that from what hath been said, you do not conclude the Christian life an idle life, a life without works; no, your works are not the fewer nor weaker, because you work from life receiv'd: no, know this, that the highest believer is the most industrious person, witness *Abraham*; and S. *Paul* a man very laborious in his place: the work of a Christian is compared to labouring, striving, running, fighting, violence in storming; and those that will do no good works because they shall not merit by them, discover a rotten heart.

2. Learn from this Doctrine, that personal election is not the subject of our text, but only rejection and non-election of works; we have only Gods firm resolution and purpose not to elect by works, as the Jews supposed he would.

The 6th Doctrine drawn from the affirmative part of this condition, *but of him that calleth, or of God that inviteth, or freely calleth.*

Sixth Doctrine, *That justification and salvation are the effects of unmerited and undeserved grace.*

Gods purpose to elect is this way, no way to be justified and saved but by grace; that which is here rendred *him that calleth*, is elsewhere rendred in the room of it *faith and grace, not of works but of faith, not of works but of grace*, here *not of works but of the caller*: so that put all together, it amounts

to

to thus much, that the salvation of man must be had in a way of grace, *Rom.* 11 6.

God is so conversant in that gracious work of inviting and calling persons to repentance and salvation, that we see he is said to be, *him that calleth*, by way of eminency; he is so stiled: *Gal.* 5. 8. *him that calleth*: 1 Thes. 5. *he that calleth*; and if we consider *Esaiah* 55. we may well allow him the title of *him that calleth*.

This may teach Christians to be greatly humble: Is thy Justification of grace notwithstanding all gospel-works that are incumbent upon thee? it informs us, that all our duties are very inconsiderable to plead with God.

But I shall only note these two things, and so passe, which are these, and respect the premises.

1. That God takes liberty to destinate and dispose of persons as to their outward estates and conditions in the world, according to the counsel of his own will, many times without any respect to their works; some are made superiour, some inferiour, some rich, some poor.

2. This passage of such Gods dealings in providence, as to *Jacob* and *Esau* about earthly things, was of a teaching nature, as to Gods Election by free-grace, to Justification and salvation without works, as to their merits, though not without them as to their presence: Thus have I done with the 4th circumstance in the predicate, and *vers.* 11,

There remains a few words to be spoken in order to the conclusion of this Paragraph, relating to the Answer to the first Objection, which relates to the 5 and 6 circumstances propounded to be spoken unto, as to the predicate, or what is spoken of concerning the subjects *Jacob* and *Esau*: and as

to

to the 5 I shall be more brief, and speak but a few words, because I am sensible there remains more to be spoken to the 6 which is contained, *ver.* 13.

The 5*th* particular to be spoken unto, was the subject with whom the Lord did intrust this Oracle of considerable significancy, it was with *Rebecca*, a woman, and mother of these children; God doth not tye himself always to intrust stronger, but sometimes weaker instruments with his minde and will.

The first part of this discovery was made to believing *Abraham* (the friend of God), and a very strong instrument; in these words, *In Isaac shall thy seed be called:* but now in this second part of this discovery, he doth not bid *Rebecca* call her husband *Isaac*, that he might impart his minde to him, but doth intrust *Rebecca* with his minde in so considerable an Oracle, herein manifesting his equal respect to the weaker sex, if faithful, as to the stronger: it hath been usual with God and Christ to communicate divine light to women for the good and benefit of mankinde in general, as I shall briefly shew you by some particular instances out of the Old and New Testament; see what a glorious prophecy the Lord intrusted *Hannah* with, 1 *Sam.* 2. a prophecy which is yet to be fulfilled; we reade of a woman 2 *Kin.* 22. who was a prophetess, *Huldah* by name, who was intrusted with the minde of God in general, and concerning *Josiah* in particular: and although there were so many eminent men in that day, as we reade of, yet they must go to this woman to enquire of her what shold come to passe, and their enquiring of her is called *enquiring of the Lord.*

And was not the great and unspeakable mistery

of

of Christs Incarnation first of all revealed to a woman, *Luke* 1. 26. the angel *Gabriel* is sent to *Mary* the espoused wife of *Joseph* a carpenter, and not only his birth, but the end, and unspeakable benefit, upon an universal account, to Jews and Gentiles, her heart is enlarged & her tongue untied to prophecy of these things for general and common use. So also the glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ was first of all imparted to a woman, *Mary Magdalen* by name, *Matth.* 28. *Mark.* 16. 9. it is said he first appeared to her: Thus here in our text, God made use of *Rebecca* to impart his minde unto: (*it was said to her*) in which is wrapt up the purpose of God concerning election *not to be of works but of the caller*: which mistery was not to be concealed in her own breast but declared for our instruction, as it is this day.

Thus we may perceive, that God bears a choice esteem to faithful women, so as to intrust them with his minde, and this is no more then he prophecyed of by his servant *Joel*, *ch.* 2. *that he would powre out his Spirit upon his handmaids as well as upon his sons*, which accordingly was fulfilled indefinitely, *Acts.* 2. 8. and for that end the Apostles laid on hands on the women as well as the men; and did not God furnish *Priscilla* as well as *Aquila* with abilitys to instruct learned and eloquent *Apollos* in the ways of Christ, *Act.* 18. and we reade of *Philips* four daughters, which did prophecy: but I shall winde up all that I have to say to this circumstance, in a word or two of instruction.

As first, It is worth our consideration the successful introduction to this gracious discovery; it was the effect of prayer; *Rebecca* applyes her self to God by prayer in this case, and this discovery

is

is her Answer: the like we have in that good woman *Hannah*; she was a zealous, cordial praying person: let this serve for a spur to prayer even in women; if you would have discoverys of the minde of God be much in prayer; women have been successful in prayer as well as men, 1 *Samuel.* 2. *for this childe I prayed, and the Lord hath given me my petition*: prayer is an inviting duty to the revealing Gods secrets.

2. This may administer a word of comfort and consolation to women, though they are the weaker vessel, and have cause to be humbled (as our Apostle saith) because they were first in the transgression, yet the Lord has in all ages made choyce of some of them to be instruments of his glory, even upon a singular account: the Scriptures takes notice of godly women as well as men; their singular faith is recorded as well as the faith of men, Heb. 11. *Sarah, Rahab, and other women, received their dead raised to life by faith*: our Apostle in his salutations to the Churches, hath the godly, and zealous, and serviceable women upon his heart as well as men, *Rom.* 16. this I do the rather take notice of, because in this day men through their pride are apt to undervalue the gifts and graces and intrustments of God to women.

Yet Thirdly, Let me caution that sex to have a special care of pride; if God have intrusted any of you with knowledge in any part of his minde, know it is for use; but know your time and place: there are times and places where and when what knowledge you have may be serviceable: But I passe this, being but an implicite Doctrine from the words, and I come to the 6th and last circumstance, contained in *ver.* 13.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Treating in Eight particulars the explanation of Love and Hatred in God, and that in this Chapter it cannot intend Election and Reprobation to heaven or hell.

Ver. 13. (*As it is written,*) Jacob *have I loved, but* Esau *have I hated.*

AS *it is written,* It is very usual with our Lord Jesus, and with his Apostles, as they were preaching or writing thus to speak, our Apostle is very frequent in these quotations, 13 or 14 times to this Church (*as it is written*;) and the servants of God had two ends in thus speaking.

1. Sometimes by way of proof and confirmation.

2. By way of demonstration, more clearly of the matter spoken of; and to both these ends are the words of *Malachi* brought.

1. To confirm the truth of that Oracle spoken to *Rebecca*, from the testimony of the prophet in his time: it is a good way to prove a point, to say thus, *it is written.*

But 2dly, This quotation is brought by way of illustration, and further clearing what was before spoken, and it is considerable, that dominion and servitude to *Rebecca* is in *Malachi's* times turned by *love* and *hatred*; he that rules is loved, he that serves (in this sense) is hated: for this prophecy of *Malachi* is counted by our Apostle for a threefold illustration and explication of *Gen.* 25. 23.

1. More

1. More particularly to distinguish, who and what those nations and people are of whom God speaks to *Rebecca*, for in *Gen.* 25. we have it only laid down in general, and comprehensively, *two nations, two manner of people:* here we have it explained to be *Israel* and *Edom*, these are the two sorts of people.

2. To certify the Jews, that the servitude of *Esau* to *Jacob* was the fruit of a defect of love in God to him: *Esau have I hated*: for we have nothing of hatred expresst, *Gen.* 25. only their state is there expresst.

3. *Malachi* gives the reason of this servitude, which is not spoken unto, *Gen.* 25. it is as they are the border of wickedness, and so *the people against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever.*

Jacob *have I loved*, *and* Esau *have I hated*; these few words require to be plainly and fully spoken unto, because they are very much wrested and wronged to the great disparagement, if not to the overthrow of Gods free and impartial love to mankinde: are not these the inferences drawn from these words?

That by *love* here in this text is to be understood *election to eternal life*; and by *hatred, reprobation to hell-torments*; and that the time of the commencement of this is *from eternity, before the persons are born, or have done good or evil*: so that God elects and reprobates, loves and hates without any respect to works good or evil: therefore do they reade these words in conjunction, *before they were born, or had done good or evil*: one was *hated* and the other *beloved*, or one *elected* and the other *reprobated*; and that at the meer pleasure and purpose of Gods will; and that these two persons by

name

name are as leading examples or types of this kinde; and that when God hath set this *love* or *hatred*, it is *for ever*, without any revocation, to the one side or the other.

Now as the Lord shall assist, I take it my proper work to labour to discharge this portion of Scripture from that hard service, in which it is so unwillingly prest to serve, contrary to its genuine sence; the which I shall do by inquiring into these Eight circumstances following.

1. What is the nature of this hatred in God?
2. Doth God hate any man without a cause?
3. Whether the first transgression of *Adam* is the cause that God takes up against mankinde to hate them?
4. What is the cause that doth provoke God against any people to hate them?
5. What are the effects of Gods hatred against any people when conceived?
6. Whether we can finde ground from hence or elsewhere to believe that God doth hate particular persons?
7. Whether Gods love or hatred to a people be irrevokable and unchangeable?
8. How doth such an understanding of our Apostle accommodate his scope and designe in this contaxt.

First, Hatred in Scripture is taken two ways.

1. Positively and absolutely in a strict sence.
2. Comparatively, in a milde and lower sence.

1. Hatred is taken sometimes in a proper and positive sence, to detest and abhor, to stand off from, and seek destruction of: thus *Cain* hated *Abel*; such a hatred is in conjunction with malice and envy: thus *Ahab* hated *Micaiah*, when he sought

ſought his life: In this ſence the Apoſtle muſt be underſtood, *Eph.5. No man ever hated his own fleſh, but nouriſhed and cheriſhed it.*

2. Sometimes hatred is taken in a comparative and milde ſence for leſſe love, this is called *hatred*; In this ſence *Jacob* hated *Leah*, *Gen.* 29. which is there interpreted only for leſſe love: thus it is underſtood *Deut.* 21. 15. *Matt.* 10. 39. *Luke* 14. *to hate father and mother, and life*, that is to love them leſſe then we love Chriſt; and in this ſence, if we will take the opinion of the Learned, who have left their opinions behinde them, it is, that there is no more in theſe words, *Eſau have I hated*, that is, in compariſon of *Jacob*, to whom I have given the land of *Canaan*, whilſt *Eſau* hath only the barren Countrey of mount *Seir*.

The Second Queſtion to be ſpoken unto is this, Doth God hate any without a cauſe? I anſwer, that as hatred may be either underſtood in a comparative ſence, and with reſpect to external and temporal diſpenſations, it may ſometimes be without a cauſe; he may ſhew leſſe love to one then to another in outward things without a cauſe: this I ſpoke unto before from *ver.* 11. but God doth never hate without a cauſe; if hatred be underſtood as to a perſonal, final and eternal ſtate.

3. Is *Adams* ſin a ſufficient cauſe taken up by God to hate his poſterity? I anſwer, that hatred in God is not to be underſtood as a paſsion of mind; but God is ſaid to hate, love, or be angry as the effects appear; now we may ſee Gods hatred to *Adams* poſterity by the effects of it, which is an irrevocable ſentence of bodily death to the grave, which hatred is plain without exceptions to all *Adams* poſterity.

But 2ly, If we ſpeak of hatred as antecedaneous

to Reprobation, as to the second death, I deny any such hatred to be in God as to *Adams* posterity so understood, but the quite contrary; See *Psal.*145.9. *God is good to all, and his tender mercys are over all his works*: and he swears, *Ezek.*33.11. *that he hath no pleasure in the death of the wicked*; and consider in the Fall, *God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son for them*, Joh.3. Rom. 5.8. *God commended his love to us, that whilst we were enemies Christ died for us*: Thus love or hatred in our Text cannot be understood of such a love or hatred, whereby either person or party are saved or damned: *Esau* in his lineal posterity was not so hated, as I have shewn already; for many of them it will be granted were saved, as *Job* and others of that race.

Fourthly, What is the cause that doth provoke God to hate a people? I answer, Sin; and therefore when God hates he renders a reason, *Psa.*5.5 *thou hatest the workers of iniquity*, Psal. 11. *he that loves violence his soul hates*: This is an undeniable truth, that if God hate so as to reprobate to the second death, it is for sin, namely actual sin, but God may hate in temporals without sin, *for he afflicts whom he loves*, Heb. 11. Esa.49. Gods carriages to Zion was as if he hated her, whilst his love was to her; Gods inward love and outward hate may stand together.

Fifthly, What are the effects of Gods hatred? I answer, a privation of good, and an infliction of evil is reckoned hatred in these Scriptures following, *Deut.*1.27. *Esa.*60. 15. *Jer.*12. *Amos* 3. 8. *Ezek.*35. *Hos.*9.15.

Sixthly, Can it be proved that God hates particular persons? that God hates things and people

is plain, *Zech.* 8.17. I answer, that whereſoever it may be elſewhere proved, it cannot be proved from this text cited by our Apoſtle out of *Malachi*; you cannot from that text underſtand a perſonal hatred; for it is plain, that what is ſaid here is upon a national and plural account: I cannot finde in all the whole Scripture where *God* is ſaid to hate any one ſingle perſon, although I can finde where *God* hath declared himſelf to love a particular perſon, as of *Solomon* and the young man, *Mark* 10. God and Chriſt loved them: this text in *Malachy* will not prove, that *God* ever hated a ſingle perſon; for there it relates to a people upon a national account, and to and of a people deſerving hatred and indignation for ever.

7ly, Is *Gods* love and hatred unalterable and unchangeble and irrevocable when it is ſet? ſome there are who would endeavour to prove the immutability of *Gods* love from *John* 13.1. *whom he loves he loves to the end*; to which I anſwer that if this text could be taken in the ſence thoſe perſons would have it, yet ſtill we want a text that would ſay ſomthing like unto it, that *whom he hates he hates to the end* alſo: but for that text, *John.* 13. it is plain enough, that the end there ſpoken of is the end of Chriſts life; he loved them as long as his life laſted, and therefore would ſhew it in ſupping with them and waſhing their feet, and adviſing them whilſt he had any time ſo to do.

But that *Gods* love and hatred is not immutable I ſhall ſhew.

1. Conſider that *God* is ſaid to love *Jacob* and *Iſrael*, yet at ſome times he is ſaid to hate *Iſrael* his Church, *Ier.* 12. nay further he is ſaid to hate the excellency of *Jacob*, *Amos.* 6. 8. and his hatred

is taken off again, *Eſa.*60.15. whereas they were hated *God* loved them again: ſo that *God* may love thoſe at one time that he hates at another, and therefore there is not that ſtreſſe to be laid upon what is here ſpoken, as ſome would have Chriſt loved the young man, but it will a be difficult thing to prove, that Chriſt loved him to eternity, ſeeing he went away from him: *Gods* hatred of man is for the moſt part by way of retaliation, as he threatens, *Deut.* 7.10. he will repay hatred: there are haters of *God*, *Rom.* 1.30. *Pſal.* 139. *hate them that hate thee*, ſaith *David*.

8thly, How doth this accommodate the Apoſtles deſigne in a further and fuller anſwer to their objection in reciting *Malachi's* words. I anſwer, the ſcope hereof tends to convince the *Iews*, that all that deſcended from *Abrahams* loins were not intended for heirs of *Canaan*; for here are ſome of *Iſaacs* race are not only denied *Canaan*, but therein leſſe beloved then ſome of the ſame line: your prophet *Malachi* (ſaith *Paul*) tels us, *Eſau* who was *Iacobs* brother was hated, from whence I may conclude, that you the unbelieving *Iews* may be hated alſo.

But I ſhall ſum up the whole of what hath been ſpoken to this context under theſe three heads.

1. That this whole paſſage reſpecting *Iacob* and *Eſau* is not, neither can it be underſtood as to them in their particular diſtinct perſons: but as to their poſterity; and therefore from hence cannot fairly be drawn perſonal election and reprobation: neither did what was ſpoken by God take place upon their perſons in their life time, as appears plainly from this quotation from *Malachi*: the *hatred* and *love* there ſpoken of is national, therefore in this

this Oracle, *Iacob* and *Eſau* are only ſpoken as heads or tipes of two families that ſhould afterwards ariſe.

2. We have heard and learned, that this Dominion and ſervitude, love and hatred is not to be underſtood of election and reprobation to heaven or hell; there is not one ſillable that ſhould incline us to ſuch a belief, neither from *Gen.* 25. *Malachi* 1. nor the Apoſtle here: and it is ſtrange that any from theſe premiſes ſhould draw ſuch a conſequence, as that *Eſau* either in his perſon or poſterity ſhould be damned eternally, or *Iacob* ſaved, from theſe places: but only that God hath left himſelf at liberty, to diſpence temporal favours to good and evil promiſcuouſly on whom he pleaſes, either with or without reſpect to works, whether good or evil.

3. The whole deſigne and ſcope of our Apoſtle in this whole paſſage of *Iacob* and *Eſau* is to poſſeſs the mindes of the legal ſelf-righteous Jews, that God, who had an undoubted and undeniable right to propound his own terms, upon which juſtification ſhould be had, here utterly rejected the way of juſtification, namely by works: and elected or choſen the way of believing in Jeſus Chriſt to be his way: and that this purpoſe and deſigne of God was pointed out in rejecting *Iſhmael* and *Eſau*, who were the elder children both of *Abraham* and *Iſaac* alſo, yet both expoſed in their poſterity to a ſtate of leſs love and favour: and are in effect ſhut out of the proper inheritance of *Abraham*; *that the purpoſe of God according to election might ſtand, not of works, but of him that calleth*: which is the ſubſtance of what *Malachi* hath written, *Iacob have I loved and* Eſau *have I hated*: the

spirit and meaning of which was, I will reject works in point of justification, and embrace faith in Christ.

Thus much for the Apostles answer to the Jews first Objection from verse the 6th to the end of the 13th.

CHAP. VII.

Shewing Gods unquestionable and absolute right to state, and propound his own terms upon which his grace of justification and salvation shall be had, and here determines it not upon the works of the Law, but believing in his son.

Ver. 14. *What shall we say then? is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.*

15. *For he saith to* Moses, *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.*

16. *So then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.*

17. *For the Scripture saith unto* Pharaoh, *even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.*

18. *Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.*

BEfore I proceed to these verses, I judge it may not be amiss or needless to revive your memories with a few words of introduction; you may remember,

remember, that upon the first entrance upon this subject, I desired you diligently to observe the main scope and designe of the Apostle in this Epistle, chapter and context; as that which would be of a most worthy tendency to the right understanding of the matter in controversy between S. *Paul* and his countrey-men the Jews: consider what is the Apostles ultimate designe and scope to effect in this his labour: which designe we may perceive was to convince the Jews in these five circumstances following.

1. To convince them of sin in not believing in Jesus Christ, and seeking for justification another way, namely by the works of the law.

2. To convince the Jews, that that way of justification unto which they did adhere, was a way absolutely rejected and reprobated of God, and that Gods purpose of election was not to stand or be founded upon that foundation, but by faith in Christ.

3. The Apostle doth labour to satisfy the Jews, that this was no new Doctrine broacht by him, but a Doctrine preach't by God to *Abraham*; though to him more darkly in types and figures, in the casting out of *Ishmael* and *Esau*, from those priviledges which were external: in these his lower passages he did teach higher things, the rejecting the old covenant of works in point of justification, and choosing the younger Gospel-covenant.

4. It is the Apostles endeavour to convince the Jews, that God had left himself an absolute and unquestionable right to propose his own terms and conditions, upon which he will justifie and save, without being imposed on by the creature; and that this his way which he hath unalterably and

peremptorily fixed and declared, is the way of free grace.

5. The Apostle is labouring here to convince the Jews, that their rejecting and casting off, was no other then the fruit and effects of their rejection of this his way by Christ, as is plain, *vers.* 32. because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law.

Now these considerations carried along in our eye will be a light and guide to us in the following subject.

We now proceed, The Apostle having been in the former Uses labouring to certify the Jews of the eternal purpose and decree of God to elect and adopt for *Abrahams* children only such as should believe in Christ, and to reject therefrom all others of what line soever descended, who should depend upon works for that privilege; and in this doing he had been vindicating the truth of Gods promise to *Abraham*, against their first Objection, verse the 6th; shewing them, that the rejecting such a carnal seed of *Abraham* as they were, did no ways cross, much less make void the word of God, or render it of none effect.

He now proceeds in these verses to vindicate the righteousnesse of God in these his proceedings, in answer to their second Objection, that God is not only just in decreeing this way of Justification, but righteous in his prosecution of the same; we may suppose, that the Jews were satisfied that the Apostle had fully answered their first Objection; and cleared the way as to the tight seed; the Jews were ready to say, *Paul*, thou hast well salved the truth of Gods word of promise, but now how can this comport with the righteousnesse of God

and

and his equity, whilſt he is rejecting the greateſt number of *Abrahams* ſeed? who have been willing, and running, zealouſly labouring in ways of obedience to that law of God delivered to them: and in the meanwhile receiving into favour the nations and ſinners of the Gentiles, either ignorant of or diſobedient to that law; and that only believing in another: This (ſaith the Jew) favours to us of unequity and unrighteouſneſſe; and thus the Apoſtles anſwer to their firſt Objection begetteth another Objection, the anſwer to which is that which the Apoſtle is running at in the following verſes, namely, to vindicate the righteouſneſſe of God: The ſubſtance of the Apoſtles anſwer amounts to thus much; that as Gods rejecting the Jews, the natural ſeed of *Abraham*, did no ways intrench upon the truth of his word of promiſe to *Abraham*, ſoneither doth his rejecting theſe who were zealous of the law intrench upon his Juſtice and righteouſneſſe: ſo that God is righteous in his proceedings though the Jews are not juſtified by the works of the law.

Ver. 14. *What ſhall we ſay then, is there unrighteouſneſſe with God? God forbid.*

That the Apoſtle is here in theſe words replying to a ſuppoſed Objection, is the received opinion of moſt that I have read, as well *Calviniſts* as others.

2. That this Objection is occaſioned by, or from what goeth before, is as univerſally granted; the Jews did think by what *Paul* had ſaid before, that he had rendred the righteouſneſſe of God at leaſt queſtionable.

I do confeſs, I finde men much divided as to the ſpring,

ſpring, riſe and root of this Objection; ſome think this Objection was raiſed from the Apoſtles quoting of *Jacob* and *Eſau*, with reſpect to the time when the words were ſpoken to *Rebecca*, which was *before they had done good or evil, one to be hated, and the other loved:* whereas they were both equally ſons of *Iſaac*, in whom the promiſe was lodged; ſome think, that the Jews thought, that *Paul* in this inſtance had at leaſt implicitely rendred God unrighteous.

2. Some think, that the Jews took this advantage from *Pauls* interpretation of theſe Oracles and inſtances of *Iſhmael* and *Eſau*, as thus; that God in his proceedings with *Iſhmael* and *Eſau* did intend to declare his eſtabliſht purpoſe of election, to be not by works but free grace, *ver.* 11. this interpretation the Jews quarrel at, that *Paul* ſhould in effect ſay, that *Gods* caſting out *Iſhmael* and ſubjugating *Eſau* typed out the caſting off the Covenant of works for Juſtification: this interpretation was very diſtaſteful to the Jews, who judged it to favour of unrighteouſneſſe: for *God* to ſlight and reject the zealous Jews, who were obſervers of the law, whilſt he received into favour the ſinners of the gentiles, as they eſteemed them.

Now the Queſtion is, which of theſe two are likelieſt to be the ſpring of this Objection; I anſwer: That it could not ſo properly be drawn from the firſt as the laſt of theſe foundations, for theſe two reaſons.

1. What the Apoſtle ſpeaks concerning *Jacob* and *Eſau*, was only what was recorded in their own Scripture, and they dared not to quarrel at that: they had the very words that *Paul* mentions, *Gen.* 25. *Malachi.* 1.

2. What

2. What *Paul* had ſaid concerning *Jacob* and *Eſau*, and particularly concerning *Eſau*, or the *Edomites* that could not offend the Jews, becauſe the *Edomites* had been their fathers implacable enemies: the Jews would hardly upon their account interpoſe or to charge *Pauls* Doctrine with imputation of unrighteouſneſſe to *God*: they did not at that day bear any ſuch love to *Edom*, therefore the ſpring and riſe of this Objection muſt ſtand grounded upon the Apoſtles concluſive inference from the premiſes, *Gen.* 25. *Mal.*1. that *God* had rejected that way of ſaving men on which they depended, and choſen the way of faith; this is that (ſaith the Jews) which ſeems to reflect unrighteouſneſſe upon *God*.

Now to take off this ſecond Objection, the Apoſtle addreſſeth himſelf in the verſes following, both in general and particular.

And firſt he denyeth the conſequence drawn from the premiſes in general, in theſe words, *God forbid, let not this be ſo much as named*; it is in St. *Pauls* account abominable: the Syriack reade, *God forgive*; implying the hainouſneſſe of the ſin wanting forgiveneſſe; it is a ſuppoſition to be abhorred, that there ſhould be any unrighteouſneſſe in *God*, as we may gather from the uſage of the ſame word elſewhere, *Rom.*3.4.6. *Gal.*2.27. *God forbid.*

2. Beſides this general diſclaimer, he proceeds more particularly in two parts, which contains the reaſons tending to demonſtrate *Gods* righteouſneſs; for we have two caſual words, *ver.*15. *ver.* 17. *for he ſaith to* Moſes; *for the Scripture ſaith to Pharaoh.*

1. With reſpect to thoſe who are the ſubjects of his mercy.

2ly, With

2ly, With reſpect to the ſubjects of his Reprobation: in both theſe the Apoſtle renders God righteous.

1ſt, As to the vindication of Gods righteouſneſs, as to the ſubjects of mercy: we have it layd down *vers.* 15. as to Gods righteouſneſſe, with reſpect to the veſſel of wrath, that we have *verſe* the 17. in that inſtance of *Pharaoh*, the Apoſtle would aſſert the undeniable right that God hath to ſhew mercy to whom he will, that is, to what manner of perſons he will: and a ſole right to reprobate & reject what manner of perſons he will; and they ſhal be impenitent rebellious rejecters of his mercy and grace, as *Pharaoh* did, who was a type of the unbelieving Jews, to whom Chriſt was ſent: from this eminent inſtance of *Pharaoh* the Apoſtle draws up a concluſion, *that God hardens whom he will*, *ver.* 18. So that the Apoſtles deſigne in theſe verſes is to vindicate the righteouſneſſe of God, both in his decree of Juſtification and Reprobation, that is, as to the terms and method upon which he doth proceed. For take this by the way, that the great conteſt between the Jews and St. *Paul*, was about the way and terms of Salvation, whether by circumciſion and legal Obedience or through faith in Jeſus Chriſt; what ſhall we ſay then? this kinde of ſpeaking is common by the Apoſtle, ſometimes to awaken Chriſtians to look backwards, and ſometimes forwards: theſe words may be read theſe three ways: *what then do we ſay? what then can we ſay?* or as here, *what ſhall we ſay then?* ſuch kinde of interogatories ſuppoſeth a ſtrong negation, *we can ſay nothing*: So it may be read, *Rom.* 4. 1. *chap.* 6. 1. we can ſay nothing why we ſhould continue in ſin: ſo *cha.* 7. 7. we can ſay nothing that

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can render the law ſin, *eha.*8.31. we can ſay nothing to diſcourage you: if God be for you, who can be againſt you? thus it is to be read, *chap.* 9. 30. 1 *Corinth.*10.19. *chap.*11. So that in theſe words we have two parts.

1. An Interrogation, *is there unrighteouſneſſe with God?*

2. This Interrogation is Seconded with a determination of abhorrency, *God forbid:* however it may appear, as if there were unrighteouſneſſe with God in this matter; yet there is nothing leſſe, far be it from us to hold or maintain any ſuch notion that might reflect unrighteouſneſſe on God, God forbid.

But I ſhall be very brief upon this verſe becauſe the controverſy doth not lye ſo much in this as in ſome other parts of this chapter; I ſhall only note two Doctrines from this verſe, and ſo proceed.

First Doctrine, *That the greateſt and moſt neceſſary and moſt glorious truths of Jeſus Chriſt, may be obnoxious to the cavils and Objections of thoſe who in other matters are maſters of great reaſon.*

Second Doctrine, *Thoſe Doctrins and opinions whatever they be that reflect any unrighteouſneſſe or hard dealings on God as to man kinde, ought to be matter of abhorrency to a Chriſtian.*

Of each of theſe a few words.

1. See this great truth of juſtification by faith without the deeds of the law; how it was cavilled at by the Jews who were the profeſſed people of God, and men of great parts; *the preaching of Chriſt crucified is to the Iews a ſtumbling block, and*

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to the greeks foolishnesse, 1 *Corinth*. 10. 23. and indeed what truths of that day were there on foot at which the Jews did not stumble? when Christ by divine power of God cast out devils they imputed it *to the power of the devil*, contrary to there own reasons; for their children must name over those possest with the devil the name of Jesus; as to the Baptism of *Iohn*, though they dare not deny, but that it was from heaven yet how they cavil at it, and reject it, as also the Doctrine of the resurrection, as a ridiculous thing, appears by their arguing with Christ about it, *Matth*. 22. but amongst all the Doctrines that were on foot in those days, there were none so pertinaciously withstood as this of justification by faith: insomuch that it is recorded of them, *Act*. 13. 44. that they contradicted and blasphemed; and that this Doctrine was the occasion: see *vers*. 39. *that by Christ all that believe shall be justified*: so *Act*. 28. 26. this is the great Doctrine caviled at; and so it was by the *Romans* and *Galatians*, for the controversy did not lye about election of persons but ways, as is plain. But I shall but touch this head.

2. That Doctrine or opinion whatsoever, that reflects any unrighteousness upon God or Christ ought to be abhorred by Christians; the Apostle cannot bear with the least supposition this way, without a *God forbid*, or *God forgive*: it is a hainous sin: it is the nature of a godly man to vindicate the honour and righteousness of God in all his ways; he is ready to stand up for Gods righteousness: so doth our Apostle elsewhere also, *Rom*. 3. 4. 5. it is one of the attributes of God which his servants in all ages have laboured to vindicate, so did Abraham, *Gen*. 18. *shall not the Judge of all the*

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earth do right? so did *Iob* take great pains to vindicate *Gods* righteousnes: so also did *David* and *Ieremy*, *chap.* 12. 1. he lays down that as an established truth; let things go how they will, yet God is righteous; *there is no unrighteousnes in God*, *Psal.* 29.

Learn from hence, to try your own hearts as to Godward; if your hearts be right to Godward, you cannot bear the least imputation to be cast upon Gods righteousnesse; *is there unrighteousnesse with God? God forbid.* I need not at this place shew you, how dishonourable to Gods righteousnesse that opinion of election and Reprobation is, which is commonly imposed upon this Chapter.

But I proceed, and having spoken a few words as to the Apostles vindication of Gods righteousnesse in general in *ver.* 14. I shall proceed to speak to his more special vindication of Gods righteousnesse, *ver.* 15. in these words.

Ver. 15. *For he saith to* Moses, *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.*

Before I come to speak closely to the matter contained in this Text, give me leave to recite the opinion of those contrarily minded upon this Text, God is here (saith some) to be understood as a supream Lord, who will have this to live, and that to dye, amongst men corrupted alike; this man to be chosen and that man to be Reprobated, meerly to shew his prerogative. *I will love* Jacob, *and I will hate* Esau, *because I will*; I may do what I will with my own: but I shall say but little to this opinion,

nion, in this place, becauſe I ſhall meet with it more fully afterwards.

Yet thus much I now ſay, that this kinde of ſpeaking ſoundeth contrary to the current of other Scriptures; for Gods thoughts of mercy are as far above our imaginations, as the heavens are above the earth; *Eſai* 55. *who would have all men to be ſaved, and come to the knowledge of the truth*: *Calvin* thinks, that this word doth ſound thus, or to this effect (*on whom I once decree to ſhew mercy, I will go on to ſhew mercy for ever; I will never take it away, but follow him with perpetual kindneſs:*) but how this paraghraph of *Calvin* will accommodate the Context, and the Apoſtles deſigne, I leave the wiſe to Judge, ſeeing he is now in this context aſſerting, that the Jews who were once in Gods favour and love are now caſt off for unbelief.

But as the Lord ſhall aſſiſt me I ſhall endeavour to lay before you the true and genuine ſcope and intent of our Apoſtle in theſe words; it is plain and granted on all hands, that the Apoſtle in theſe verſes is labouring to deliver his former Doctrine from the leaſt imputation of reflecting unrighteouſneſs upon God, as they were ready to charge upon him: you have heard before, that the ſpring of this objection is from the Apoſtles interpretation drawn from two inſtances of *Iſhmael* and *Eſau*, which was this: ſee upon *vers.* 11. that God therein did teach, *that his purpoſe of election was not of works but of free grace, or of him that calleth*: here lyeth the foot of the objection, and it may be framed thus: that if thou teach, that God doth not reward and deal with men according to their works, then thou doſt caſt a blemiſh upon the righteouſneſs

ighteousnes of God, who hath declared this to be a part and none of the smaller parts of his righteousnes, *that he doth reward every man according to his works*: and least any should think this objection, to be substantial, I will speak a few words by way of distinction unto it; therefore remember this I pray, that the works spoken of, and struck at in this Epistle, chapter and context, are not intended works of faith and Gospel-obedience and holynes, but these works must be understood of legal and ceremonial obedience, as circumcision and those rites on which the Jews rested.

2. Neither the presence of those works, but as looked on as meritorious, for justification & salvation: now in order to the Apostles asserting this his Doctrine, and vindicating Gods righteousnes, the Apostle in this 15. *verse*, is reciting the words of God antiently spoken to *Moses*, *Exod.* 33. and doubtles the Apostle did well know, as he was guided by the spirit of God, that these words sute his present purpose; as with much strength to silence and satisfie the Jews, who were ready to say, it is true, *Paul*, thou hast spoken something to this point, that God hath not broke his word made to our fathers, *Abraham* and *Isaac*, in rejecting us who are so considerable a part of *Abrahams* seed; But suppose we do concess with thee, that herein the word of God is not violated, yet how canst thou clear the righteousnes and equity of God in so proceeding, that we who have been zealous willers and runners, and that according to the laws and rules given by God himself should lose all our labour, and be rejected, whilst others who have been no observers of these laws, but are ungodly, prophane and Idolaters, are received into favour,

by faith in another; these proceedings seems to favour of unrighteousness, according to *Heb.* 6. 10. *God is not unrighteous to forget our labour of love*: yet this thou hast taught, and how canst thou clear this doctrine from reflecting disparagement upon the righteousness of God.

Now the business that the Apostle hath before him, is to vindicate Gods righteousness, notwithstanding which to do, he brings these words to *Moses*: in which Scripture we have at least implicitly contained, the absolute and unquestionable right that God hath left himself, to state and propound his own terms and conditions upon, how this grace of Adoption, Justification and salvation shall be enioyed, whether upon the works of the law or faith; which was the case in hand: God hath an absolute prerogative without the propositions of men or angels: I will shew (saith God) this mercy of justification to what kinde of persons I please, which terms (as I have shewed before) are only believing in his Son, and no other way whatsoever; which conditions was wanting in the Jews, notwithstanding their pertinacious contending with the holy Apostle: for although they had been zealous observers of the law as aforesaid, this was not the terms upon which this adoption to be *Abrahams* seed was promised.

2. Whereas they were ready to quarrel at the reception of the Gentiles into favour, this text doth answer, that God was not tyed to the Jews only, for he had an unquestionable right to shew mercy on whom he pleased, and consequently to the Gentiles if he pleases; and they are found within the compasse of his terms; and therefore the Jews were peremptory and overbold to question and quarrel,

quarrel, and reply against God, as we shall hear more hereafter. God is not accountable to man in any of his ways towards sinners, by what way or means they shall be blest; forasmuch *as all both Jew and Gentile have sinned, and come short of the glory of God*, and so stand in need of his relief: and it is but reasonable, that he which is the free donor of the grace of justification and salvation, should have liberty to propound his own terms, whether by works or faith; which was certainly the case in hand. But for the more orderly management of this portion of Scripture, I shall in the first place endeavour to explicate these words spoken to *Moses*, by enquiry into six Circumstances.

1. What was the occasion of Gods speaking these words to *Moses*, here cited by our Apostle?

2. How this word in this quotation doth accomodate the Apostles designe in vindicating Gods righteousnesse, in rejecting the Jews, and receiving the Gentiles?

3. What kinde of grace and compassion, and mercy is here intended?

4. Why it is rendred in these two words, and how we may understand them?

5. What kinde of people or persons are intended in this restrictive word *whom* twice expresst?

6. How is Gods will to be understood here, being four times reiterated, *I will, I will, I will, I will*?

1. It is worth our enquiry the occasion of these words in the Originall place to *Moses*, Exo. 33. which was this, whilst *Moses* was with God in the

Mount to receive the law, *Aaron* and the people fell to Idolatry, *they made a golden calf, and worshiped it*; appropriating that great and unparalelled deliverance lately received, to this *calf*, or such like Idol: *these are* (say they) *the gods that brought us out of the land of Egypt*, whereupon the wrath of God was justly kindled against this people, and sends *Moses* in hast down to them, who was himself so moved at it that he threw the tables of Gods law out of his hands, and brake them in this his passion: yet soon after, this meek sweet-natured *Moses* sets himself to seek Gods face and favour for, and in behalf of this rebellious and Idolatrous people; although God had told him, *that himself would not go up with them lest he should consume them by the way, but he would send his angel before them*; yet notwithstanding *Moses* is not satisfied, but doth passionately still beg Gods face and presence, and sight of his glory; and it is worthy our taking notice, the argument that *Moses* useth with God *ver.* 13. *consider that this people are thy people*: and again, *ver.* 16. to demonstrate that I and thy people *are separated from all the people upon the face of the earth*, in which argument we have *Moses* pleading the peculiarity of this people, that God had taken them to himself, and so was obliged to them in Covenant, let their manners be what they will.

Now the reply of God to *Moses* doth savour of some dislike to *Moses's* Intercession upon this argument, as if *Moses* would impose upon God, that he must of necessity be the God of *Israel*, because they are *Israel*; and hereupon comes in these words as a reply to *Moses*, as if God should say, do not think I am tyed to *Israel*, because I have brought them out of *Egypt*, no, *I will be gracious*

to

to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy to whom I will shew mercy: I am not tyed to this or that people, upon any externall obligations, I have others, that I shall shew mercy unto as well as they; in which words we have a prophecy of the admission of the gentiles into favour and mercy with God; and indeed, if this had not been Gods designe, how could this have suted to the Apostles designe.

2ly, But how doth this Scripture accomodate the Apostle to vindicate Gods righteousness?

1. I answer, This Citation is out of their own law, and so was a good testimony to his end, for they owned what was recorded there; Gods way of saving, according to my Doctrine, is no other then what he declared to *Moses* of old, that it was *by grace, by compassion, not works*; and the Jews would easily grant, that God could do no unrighteous thing, they honoured God and his sayings, but they questioned whether *Paul* were within the compass of Gods works and sayings: therefore the Apostle to deliver himself, cites this saying of their Law, that said as much in effect as he had said; for the Scripture here speaks the same to *Moses*; this in general: but more particularly, this saying doth accomodate the Apostle, if we will consider the spring of the Jews Objection, as from his Doctrine before laid down, *ver.* 11. *that Gods purpose of election was not of works but of him that calleth*, that is, that it lyeth meerly in Gods own breast, of his meer mercy and compassion, and so cannot be of works; and that the foot of the Jews objection lay upon the former doctrine, is the judgement of many besides my self: now *if it be of grace, it is not of works*,

as the Apostle argues, *chap.* 4. 5. That this was their Objection is further confirmed by the Reply following, *ver.* 16. *It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy*: So that (saith the Apostle) my Doctrine of Justification by free-grace and the pleasure of God through believing, is no other then what in effect and substance God said to your old friend *Moses*, *Exod.* 33. and you will acknowledge God righteous in such his ways.

3. What kinde or degree of grace and mercy in God is this, that this text speaks of? when it saith, *I will have mercy on whom I will*; because the Scripture speaks expresly of two kinds or sorts of love and grace shown to mankinde from God.

1. There is one kinde of grace which is antecedent to faith and obedience, such is the gift of Christ and means of Salvation.

2ly, That which is subsequent and follows upon believing, when persons are admitted into Gods special favour by adoption; Now which of these are here intended? I answer, the latter not the first, for these three Reasons.

1. Because God makes no difference nor distinction of men in the first, namely the gift of Christ, and his preventing grace, as the learned calls it; in that respect it need not run as it doth here, *I will have mercy on whom I will*: but on all equally alike *John.* 3. 16. *Rom.* 5. 8. 1 *John* 4. 10. and according to this love he calls all men every where *to Repent*, Acts. 17. and *many are called*.

2. The whole discourse of the Apostle in this context, doth not relate to the first but the latter: the scope of this Epistle doth relate to Justification and Adoption, not of preventing grace, but subsequent

ſequent grace, according to theſe texts. *Gal.* 3. 26. *chap.* 4. 6. 1 *John* 12.

3. It muſt be taken in the latter not the firſt ſence, becauſe he is taking pains to ſatisfie the Jews, that they were excluded from that grace and mercy that he is ſpeaking of all along, as *ver.* the 8th, *the children of the fleſh are not the children of God, but the children of the promiſe are accounted for the ſeed:* but none will venture to ſay, that the Jews are excluded from Gods preventing grace; they had the benefits of Chriſts death and the priviledges of the Goſpel; So that it is not here to be read or underſtood, *I will have mercy*, that is, chooſe unregenerate men, and thereby draw, nay force and neceſſitate them to repentance and faith, but I will juſtifie and ſave what kinde of perſons I pleaſe and upon what terms I pleaſe.

4. Why doth the Lord ſpeak it in two words? which alſo our Apoſtle turns by mercy and compaſſion.

1. Why in two words.

2. What doth theſe two words, import?

1. This kinde of ſpeaking by way of reiteration or repetition doth import much ardency and intentneſſe and vehemency in the ſpeaker; as when *Thomas* ſaith, *my Lord and my God*, he ſheweth his warmth of affection to Chriſt; ſo in the Lords thus ſpeaking, he demonſtrates that he is much affected with the acts of this grace and mercy, and that he would alſo have it taken notice of.

But 2ly, What doth theſe two words ſignifie? I anſwer. Theſe are two diſtinct words in the Original, yet theſe words are taken one for another, and are the ſelf ſame in ſignification, the greek Lexicon expounds the one by the other: yet ſome learned

ned men tells us, that the former word signifieth the inward disposition and passion of the minde to mercy, and the other signifieth the out-goings of this mercy in the execution of it, in matter of fact, which is the relieving those in misery; thus God may bear inward affections and outward manifestations to whom he pleaseth.

5. That which we are to enquire into, is the extent of these words, with respect to *who* or *whom*, whether they are to be understood in the abstract or concreet; that is, whether persons simply considered as such persons only, or as persons so considered; as such a *species* or kinde of persons so qualified: it doth much tend to the clearing up the truth in this context rightly to understand this circumstance.

1. I answer, we are not bound to understand it in the abstract of such distinct persons because this phrase, or this kinde of speaking is used specifically of kind and qualification elsewhere, *Psal.* 16. 3. *in whom is all my delight*, that is thus so qualified: so *John* 18. *I know whom I have chosen*, which supposeth such as are contrary to *Judas*, *vers.* 18. *whom he will he hardneth*; 2 *Timothy* 1. 12. *I know whom I have believed*, that is, that he is mercyful, faithful, powerful, *&c.*

2. That this place must be understood specifically of such a kinde, appears, because this very grace and mercy of justification is never promised to any abstracted subject, as to *John* or *Thomas*, but to persons believing as such: the Scripture speaks plentifully hereunto, *Mark* 16. 16. *Joh.* 1. 12. *Joh.* 6. 40. *this is the will of him that sent me, that whosoever seeth the son, and believeth on him may have eternal life*: in which words we have explained

ed the terms of this grace and mercy, it is upon conditions; *for in Christ Jesus all the promises are yea and amen: we are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus:* so that the words before amounts to thus much; I will shew the mercy of adoption, justification, and salvation, to all that do believe whether Jews or Gentiles.

The Sixth head to be enquired into is, whether this will of God in our text so often reiterated, to shew mercy and grace, be peremptory and absolute? I answer, that this kinde of speaking, *I will, I will, I will, I will,* doth import the greatest resolvednesse imaginable, and the greatest peremptorinesse that can be expresst: doth it not savour of much resolvedness and peremptorinesse in *Pharaoh, Exo.* 15. when he speaks after this manner; *I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoyl,* even so must it be understood in this text, that the Lord is much resolved in this matter, that is, to shew the mercy of adoption and salvation to believers, and that, not all the men on earth, nor angels in heaven, can alter or turn his resolution or purpose, as not to shew this mercy to them that believe, or to shew it to any upon any other terms; God is greatly resolved, everlastingly resolved, to proceed upon these and no other terms, *to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.*

Thus I have briefly endeavoured to give you the meaning of these words, as they are a quotation out of *Exo.* 33. and now according to my promise, I shall sum up the whole into seven doctrinal conclusions, which are as followeth.

1. Doctrine,

1. Doctrine, *That Gods ſpeakings of old to his ſervants were very ſignificant and teaching to ages and generations to come after.*

The ſayings which in themſelves ſeemed dark, yet Chriſt and his Apoſtles make great uſe of them; time would fail me to mention thoſe many quotations of Chriſt and his ſervants out of the Old Teſtament; how lightſome doth our Lord make thoſe dark words of God, *Exo.* 3. 6. *I am the God of Abraham, the God of* Iſaac *and* Jacob: which our Lord brings to prove the reſurrection of the dead to the Sadducees; ſo the Apoſtle findes argument in this 33. *Exo.* to prove the initiating the Gentiles.

The 2. Doctrine, Is drawn from the familiarity of God with *Moſes*: from whence I note.

There is much freedome in God to communicate himſelf in his minde and will to his faithfull ſervants.

Moſes was *faithful in all his houſe*; *God ſpake to him face to face*, as a man ſpeaks to his friend ſo did God to *Abraham*, *Gen.* 18. concerning *Sodom*: only from hence learn a word of caution, which is this, that notwithſtanding this his familiarity with *Moſes*, yet God will not bear with *Moſes* in ſin, God ſlew him, he muſt not enter the land of *Canaan*, becauſe he did not ſanctify the name of God; therefore take heed of that antinomian Opinion, that God ſees no ſin in his people, *for he ſaid unto Moſes*,

3. Doctrine,

3. Doctrine, *The calling the Gentiles to the grace of the Gospel, was founded in the will of God from the beginning I will have mercy on them so qualified.*

This our Apostle acknowledgeth, *Ephes.* 3. God had a designe to enlarge his grace to the Gentiles, though the Jews the elder brother could not bear to see the kindness shewn by the father to the prodigal, *Luke* 15. they forbid the Gospel to be preached to the gentiles, that they might be saved: they would fain have restrained the grace of God to their terms, but God will have his own terms *Gen.* 9. 27. *God shall perswade* Japheth *to dwell in the tents of Shem.*

4. Doctrine, *Not only the means but the terms of salvation are founded in the absolute will and pleasure of God.*

As Christ was the means, so faith the terms upon which life and justification is attained: it is not what man thinks, but what God propounds; *I will shew mercy on whom I will.*

5. Doctrine, *The justification and adoption of mankinde is the effects of free-grace and meer mercy, when all the conditions are performed which are required.*

What God doth for sinners though upon highest terms of believing and obeying, is called mercy, compassion, and grace, *Ephe.* 2. 5. *saved by grace.*

6. Doctrine,

6. Doctrine, *That Gods terms of grace and acceptance with him, are fixed on his part with all peremptoriness and absolute resolution: so that men nor Angels cannot change nor alter them.*

Therefore is the gospel called the everlasting gospel.

7. Doctrine, from these terms *grace, mercy,* I observe.

That men indefinitly considered, before justification and adoption through faith, are truly miserable, and stand in need of mercy, let their privileges be what they will as to preventing grace.

I shall close all with an inference, that God is righteous in rejecting the zealous Jew, and receiving through faith the believing gentile, because he may of right shew mercy to whom he will; and this is no new assumption, but he was invested with this power from the beginning; *for he said unto* Moses, *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy.*

So much for the 15. *verse.*

CHAP. VIII.

Shewing that it is of meer grace and mercy in God, all men having sinned, to call them upon any terms whatsoever, to justification, all grace no debt.

Ver. 16. *So then, it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.*

WE have contained in these words, the Apostles emphatical conclusion and result, drawn upon the premises: these two words *so then*, are a common note of inference and conclusion elsewhere, as well as here: as I shall shew you from other Scriptures: and it would reflect a clear light upon the context, if the reader would take good heed of these words as an inference from what goeth before, although I shall not deny, but that the Apostle in these words may have an eye to the whole context; yet I shall say, he had a more special eye to the words immediatly going before, cited out of *Exo.* 33. 19. which he brings to discharge himself from casting any blemish upon Gods righteousness, by his doctrine of justification by faith, and consequently by free-grace: the Apostle seems to argue thus, if God have a sole and unquestionable right to shew mercy to whom, or what sort of persons he will, and upon what terms he please, then adoption and justification doth not begin in the creatures will, nor end in his own work, *It is not of him that willeth or runneth*: the great controversy between our Apostle and the Jews (as

you

you have here before) was about the terms of way of Justification, whether by the works of the law or by grace, through faith in Christ : that for which the Apostle incurrs the high displeasure of the Jews, is for asserting faith alone as sufficient to justifie circumcision or uncircumcision ; that this was the Apostles Doctrine is plain, if you reade this epistle with that of the *Galathians* ; it was the preaching this doctrine that occasioned the Jews to charge him with impeaching Gods righteousnesse, now we may easily perceive, that our Apostle in these verses is upon his vindication and Justification from that false imputation, and that which he apprehended himself concerned to speak unto, is still to stand by his interpretation of those two instances of *Ishmael* and *Esau*, which two (as he had taught) did loudly speak the purpose of God not to be of works ; *not of works, but of grace* ; to vindicate which he before brings the saying of God of old to *Moses* ; as if he should have said, this unalterable purpose of God is contained *Exod.* 33. 19. Or as if he should have said, God is not unrighteous in such his proceedings with mankinde, for as much as he hath an unquestionable right to propound his own terms, upon which he will justifie and save men, and as equitable a right to propound his own terms upon which he will blinde, and harden and reprobate men.

For thus much doth the Lord in effect speak in his declaration to *Moses* ; I am resolved to adopt, justifie, and save persons, in what capacity, and under what qualifications I please ; and will not be imposed upon, or taught by man, what I have to do, or what becometh me to do of this kinde.

This I say doth God with a very high hand

fert to *Moſes*, in order to ſilencing him in his interceſſion for the ſinful *Iſraelits*; which if ſo, then it follows in this 16 *ver.* that the great mercy of Adoption and Juſtification, as to the terms and conditions of it, doth not ariſe, nor is not at the will or contrivance of the moſt earneſt deſirers, or moſt induſtrious perſuers of the law, much leſs of any other ſort of men whatſoever, but of God who is the ſole founder of this mercy and the inviter unto this bleſſed feaſt of Juſtification, of his own good will and pleaſure.

This 16. *Ver.* well conſidered, eſpecially in conjunction with *ver.* 32. of this *chap.* and *chap.* 10. 3. doth let in a great beam of light to this whole context, and doth to ſome good degree unty the knot of this conrroverſy, as it, and they, carry in them a reaſon why the Jews fell ſhort of Juſtification, not for want of *willing*, or want of *running*, but want of running in a right way, *ver.* 32. becauſe they ſought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law, *chap.* 10. 3. they being ignorant of Gods righteouſneſſe, or the way of Gods righteouſneſſe, and going about to eſtabliſh their own; they did not attain to the law of righteouſneſſe, which *Calvin* expounds thus, they have not found the terms of Juſtification propounded and authoriſed by God, ſo that this text conſidered with the fore-named, doth undeniably prove and demonſtrate to thoſe who are willing to underſtand, that the famous controverſy between the Apoſtle and the Jews, was not about perſonal and abſolute election and Reprobation before time or power to believe, but about the terms of Juſtification and adoption, which way perſons come to be legitimate children of *Abraham*, whether by works or by faith,

which

which is answered negatively, *not of works*: now for our more orderly proceedings, and to answer the method of an exposition; I shall first explain those words that want explication, and afterwards observe what is doctrinal in them.

1. I shall enquire into the subject here spoken of, in these two words, (*it is*), what is that he means, *it is not of willer or runner*? what is not the product of *willing* and *running*?

2. What *him* is here to be understood twice expresst, *not of him, not of him*, who is he that *wills* and *runs* in vain?

3. What is this *willing* and *running*? and why set forth by these terms?

4. Why is *willing* and *running* opposed to God and mercy? *it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy*.

To the first, as to these two words, (*it is*), they are inserted in the translation, as a necessary supplement, though they are not in the original; as we have the like supplement elsewhere, as to the same words: and that this supplement was necessary, is of all granted, and is necessary to fulfill the sence, and set forth the subject of this speech: to show that something was aimed at by these persons of whom we are speaking there are but two opinions about this subject that *I* know of:

First, some tells us, that it is election or power to believe which is here intented, in this *it is*; and therefore some to gratifie such a notion, do supply in the room of *it is* the word *election*; *it is not of him that willeth or runneth*, but this is but to accomodate their own private Opinion without any warrant from the Original (as I have said before) for

for there is not one syllable in the Original of election.

The second Opinion is, that the *it* intends Justification and Adoption, and those blessings belonging thereunto, and not election, or precedent or preventing grace, and that this latter, and not the first is here intended, I shall offer my Judgment as followeth.

First, the truth hereof appears, by comparing the parallel places with this, which if they should be read of election, how incongruously would they sound, and indeed without sence: as for instance; *ver.* 32. *because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law*; so *Rom.* 4. 16. These places and indeed the whole context speaks of Justification and adoption, not of precedent but subsequent grace.

But 2ly, If we reade it, and take it for Justification, then it doth comport and concur with the context currently; we may easily see, that Justification is the antecedents to this relation *it is*; I need not bring texts to prove, that Justification was that which the Jews run for, and mistt of; that Justification was the subject of the Apostles discourse, is plain: we have these words, *justify* and *Justification* and *Justified* above twenty times in *Galathians* and *Romans*.

3. If the Apostle should here mean election, power to believe, or preventing grace, there were no Argument in his words; he did but fight against the winde, to say, that election before-time or power to believe was not of will or works, *de facto*, this none would oppose, but it is certain, that the Apostle was here saying something to his Antagonists the Jews, who did seek Justification in mat-

ter of fact by their legal Obedience, *Gal.*3. 4. So that if our Apostle should here intend election, or power to believe, or faith, it would have been altogether besides his present businesse with the Jews.

4. If we take this *it is* for Justification, and adoption, and consequently sutsequent grace, that this was *not of him that willeth or runneth*; then it runs in a strait line with other places of Scripture; see *Rom.* 3.24. *justified freely by his grace*, ver. 28. *without the deeds of the law*, Eph.2.8. *not of works of righteousnesse*, *Titus* 3.5. So that Justification and salvation is not of the willer or runner.

2. By way of explication what *him* is here to be understood which is twice exprest?

I answer, That although the Apostle is principally speaking to and of the Jews, yet it comprehends all, willers or runners, as well gentiles as Jews; the whole *species* and kinde of runners; such as propound believing as their own terms; for faith doth not justify as the terms of the creature, but as it is Gods terms, no more then legal Obedience; as the healing the blinde mans eyes by clay, was not by that sympathetical vertue that was in the clay but the power of God, and the wisdome of God; so *it is not of him that willeth or runneth*, though by faith, as his own terms, to such an end, but as he by believing doth humbly fall in with Gods means to such an end.

3. Why *willing* and *running*? I answer.

1st, *Willing* signifies strong desires to wish, ask, pray with great earnestnesse; it is taken two ways.

1st, Sometimes authoritatively to *will*, is to resolve or establish a thing, *I will have it so.*

2. Sometimes

2. Sometimes to *will*, is taken submissively, as in Christs prayer to his father, *John* 17. *father I will*, that is, I desire it may be so; and so willing must suppose a thirsting desire of having it to be so.

2. By *running* is understood labouring, pursuing, taking pains; running is a labourious work: many interpreters would have this passage to allude to that of *Jacob* and *Esau* in person about the blessing, that it was not in *Isaac's* willing *Esau* the blessing, nor in *Esau's* running for it, but of the providence of God that confirmed it on *Jacob*: but I am not of the minde that *Paul* looked so far back as this, but he had his example before him; it was a truth that the Jews with whom he speaks, had deserved to be reckoned great *willers* and *runners*, and as to such, and of such he speaks; *chap.* 10. 1. *I bear them record that they have a zeal of God*, here's their will and desire: see how zealous they were *Acts.* 15. 1. they taught that except persons were circumcised, and kept the law of *Moses*, they could not be saved; and this their zeal held after they believed in Jesus Christ, see *Acts* 2 20. they had a strong desire to be accepted and justified of God: they were these willers chiefly intended.

2. They were also those *runners*, as is expressed of them *ver.* 31. They followed or pursued the law or terms, as they thought would have justified them: they sought Justification, *chap.* 11. 7. *Israel* hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, so that the spirit of God takes notice in these emphatical words, that the circumcised *Israel* were great *runners*: and as the fruit and effect of this their runnings, they did boldly challenge Justification and Adoption thereupon: Now the Apostle to prevent them, tells them in our text, *that it is*

not of him that willeth, nor runneth, but in God that shews this mercy of Justification.

4. Why have we here such a formidable opposition between *willing* and *running*, and God and mercy? I answer, These are opposed to set forth the inconsiderableness and successlesness of all the utmost endeavours of the creature, though willing and running, inward and outward, for the procuring this blessing, that so it might lay the creature low in all his endeavours, knowing that he doth not receive Justification as a debt but as a gratuity, *Rom.* 4. 4. 5. *willers* and runners are apt to have their feet taken in that snare of prescribing laws to God.

2. This opposition may be made, to shew that propensity and readiness that is in God to shew mercy. It is not to be attributed to mans inward or outward endeavours, but to God who is so ready to shew mercy.

3. This opposition is made to shew the positive rejection of works and all endeavours of men, and the absolute and positive way of obtaining is by sitting still in believing, as the Prophet saith in another case, *our strength is to sit still.* But against this there may seem to lie a twofold objection.

1. If there be no profit in wishing, willing, and desiring, nor in labouring, running or pursuing after justification, then to what end should our desires be enlarged, and our endeavours be pursuing; Shall we run in vain, seeing it is not to be had that way? then let us sit still and be only passive and leave God to shew his grace, where, when, and to whom he please.

To which I answer,

1. These Willers and Runners in our Text must respect

respect the circumcised Judisaries who trusted to and boasted in their legal obedience to the Ceremonial Law, and their own Righteousnesse, our Text doth immediatly concern them.

2. If it be taken for Gospel willing and running to the highest strain, it cannot be meritorious of justification, because the bloud of Christ admits no competitor or co-partner in the point of justification, See *Rom.*3.20,24,28. *cha.*4. *Gal.*3.16. *cha.* 5.4. yet notwithstanding it doth not follow, that the creature should sit still and cease all his desires and endeavours; as thus, because the pardon of a Malefactor ariseth freely out of the Princes breast, and of his prerogative, it doth not follow that he must sit still, for although it is not in the power of the malefactor to merit a pardon, yet he may sue it out as the grace of the prince. It is our duty to hunger and thirst after the grace of justification as well as after sanctification, and they are pronounced blessed by Christ who are so qualified.

2. Object. Doth not this seem to crosse some other Scriptures that exhorts to, and calls for great industry, as 1 *Cor.*9.24. where we are called upon *so to run that we may obtain*; where we have obtaining propounded as the great encouragement to running: So also *Heb.*12. we are *to have an eye to the recompence of reward*, to encourage us in our running: and *Paul* himself was not willing to run in vain; and we are called upon *Phil.*2.12. *to work out our salvation with fear and trembling.*

I answer, That in all these places the Apostle speaks to justified persons in order to perseverance, not to such as are strangers to the ways of God and his Gospel, as these in our Text were;

and all these endeavours are more properly after sanctification then after justification; we are called upon to *work out our salvation*, and to *perfect our holinesse* in so doing; but we are never called upon to work out our justification, that is only the effect of Christs death and sufferings, without any other efficient cause or means: all acts of holinesse in man is rather to declare his justified state then procure it, *Abraham* in obeying and following God in those several steps which the Scripture takes notice of, did not thereby procure but demonstrate his justification; and see how *Abrahams* obedience and faith centers in one; to this end our Apostle saith, that *Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousnesse*, thereby he was accounted righteous: yet S. *James* saith, *our father* Abraham *was justified by works when he offered* Isaac, *Jam.* 2. 21. that is, he did declare or demonstrate it thereby.

Thus I have briefly run through the words by way of explication.

I now return to consider of them as they lie.

And before I proceed to those Doctrinal Conclusions which lyeth in them, I shall briefly take notice of them as they are the Apostles Conclusion and result, and inference from what goeth before; for that they are as a conclusion, they have the note of an inference or conclusion in this *so then*, for so these words are used elsewhere: See *chap.* 10.17. *So then faith comes by hearing*, which words are the result from the former; so *chap.* 8.8. *so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God*, cha. 14.12. *So then every one must give an account of himself to God*: so 1 *Cor.* 3.7, *chap.* 7.38. thus we see that this kinde of speaking is used as a center to draw

draw the precedent and subsequent matter to it; so that this 16. *verse* is a result: the Apostle in these words doth conclude and seal up the matter of this first argument, in order to purging himself from the Jews false imputation of charging God with unrighteousnesse, which they gathered from what he had said, as is recorded *vers.* 11. *that God doth not justifie by works*; this result doth cast light upon the whole Context upon a three-fold consideration.

1. As these words doth determine the nature and matter of the controversie between the Apostle and the Jews, that it was about the terms of justification, and who had right to make them, both which are here resolved, not of him that is most desirous and pursuing after it; he has not power to propound, but God who is the gracious donour of it.

2. By the Apostles result in this verse, he doth determine where the foot of the Jews objection lay, which was from his interpretation made of these two instances of *Ishmael* and *Esau*, as their rejection taught the rejection of works as to justification, *ver.* 12. and not upon the unequal proceedings of God with *Jacob* and *Esau*, as some would have it; for it will easily be granted, that *not of works*, and *not of him that willeth or runneth*, are terms synonimous, or of like signification.

3. We must understand this conclusion and inference to be drawn from the words immediately going before, *Exod.* 33. 19. *So then*, that is to say, from hence it appears, *not to be of the willer or runner*, because God in shewing mercy is positively resolved in himself, and from himself about it; so that this conclusion concludes the propriety of

Exo. 33. to this controversie; and that God spake the same in effect to *Moses*, as here S. *Paul* speaks to the Jews, that is to say, that justification and adoption is of free grace and mercy and not of works.

Thus much for the scope and explication of the words, I shall now sum up the whole of this verse in these five doctrinal Conclusions.

From the nature of these words as they are a result or conclusion, whilst S. *Paul* is labouring to vindicate Gods righteousnesse and equity in his terms and proceedings with mankinde, he arrives at great satisfaction in himself.

The Doctrine is this,

That he that makes it his work to vindicate Gods righteousnesse in his proceedings with man prevails in his arguments.

The Apostle had no cause to be ashamed of his contest in this matter, in asserting justification by faith in Christ without the deeds of the law, though in so asserting he is charged for impeaching Gods righteousnesse; yet he overcame, and in vindicating Gods righteousnesse he vindicates his own doctrine, (*So then*) *it is not.*

2. Doctrine, *That justification is a prize worth the running for when once seen and understood.*

The Apostle supposeth that these Jews had been willing and running after it as a blessed priviledge; justification with God is very desirable: but suppose you should ask me, what it is to be justified? I answer; when a person is declared just upon the account

account of pardon and non-imputation of sin, that is the blessed state which the Apostle speaks of *Rom.* 4. 6, 7, 8. *blessed is the man to whom God doth not impute sin*: but how may thee and I know whether we are in this blessed state? I answer.

1. If thou beest justified with God, thou art acquitted in thine own conscience, there remains no more conscience of sin: this is that spoken of, *Rom.* 5. 1. *being justified with God there is peace in thy conscience*, that is, quiet, it doth not condemn thee.

2. If thou beest justified from sin, thou dost experience strength against sin, that sin which is pardoned, we have a perfect hatred upto; we have an eminent place for this, 2 *Corinth.* 7. 11. there was indignation and revenge against it.

3. Doctrine, *It is possible for persons cordially to desire and laboriously to pursue this mercy of justification, and yet come short, and not attain it.*

This was the case of the Jews, they were *willers* and *runners*, they had a zeal, a desire, they sought after it, *verse* 31. yet not attained it; *chap.* 11. 7. *Israel* did not attain what they sought after, and why, not because they were not elected, *vers.* 32. but *because they sought it not by faith*; therefore this we may learn, *that in our Zeal and running, it is good to keep Gods line.*

4. Doctrine,

4. Doctrine, *That persons to some degree righteous and obedient to Gods laws, are very apt to challenge and strongly expect the great priviledge of justification as a debt for such their obedience, or as a reward for such work.*

Therefore the Apostle doth set himself against this mistake, this makes him so intently and pathetically cry down works in this Epistle, *chap.* 4. 5. *not of debt*, *Gal.* 2. 16. and many other places; this was the state of the Jews, they thought themselves much wronged, that they were not justified; they made their boast of the law; oh! how apt are persons to lean upon their works for justification: we have an eminent instance of this in the parable of the pharisee, *Luke* 18.

5. Doctrine, *That the absolute right of nominating and appointing the laws and terms of justification, is in God*; because it is of his meer mercy and grace, that men having all sinned, are called to justification upon any terms whatsoever: God in shewing mercy is resolved to follow his own method: *so then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.*

Thus I have spoken to the first branch, wherein *Paul* vindicates Gods righteousness, in that he hath a right of prerogative, *to shew mercy to whom he please, and upon what terms he will*: and so I have done with the 16. verse.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Gods act of hardning and reprobating to damnation, is the effects of great and persevering rebellion, when men shut their eyes and ears at last after much long-suffering and patience.

Ver. 17. *For the Scripture saith unto* Pharaoh, *even for this purpose have I raised thee up, that I might make my power known, and that my name might be declared in all the earth.*

WE are now entring upon those more difficult places of this chapter, which to many seems hard to be understood, as S. *Peter* speaks concerning some things in his beloved brother *Pauls* writings, which (as he saith) *the unlearned wrest*, as they do other Scriptures, *to their own destruction*. Now amongst these dark and obscure passages, this seems to be one, concerning *Pharaoh*: now a right understanding of this passage requires divine assistance, in conjunction with a narrow search, and diligent, and studious comparation of Scriptures; the latter of which I can say, that I have not been wanting in to my power: and forasmuch as it is *Gods* work to open our understandings to understand the Scriptures, I desire the reader to be humbly waiting upon him for light, as he goeth along in the following matter. It is agreed on by most writers, that the Apostle is still prosecuting his answer to the second objection, levyed against his Doctrine

Doctrine by the Jews, which objection was occasioned by his answer to the first; and having answered the first branch, and vindicated Gods righteousness in shewing mercy to whom, or what sort of persons he please, and upon what terms, from that saying of God to *Moses* of old, he now in these words proceeds to the second branch of his answer, which is, to vindicate & demonstrate Gods righteousness in condemning, rejecting and hardning whom he please, or rather what manner of persons he please: Now his answer in this second branch, the Apostle buildeth upon another antient saying of God by way of threatning to *Pharaoh* by the mouth of *Moses*, *Exo.* 9. 16. which saying of God to *Moses* is the subject of our text. The argument in general is formed thus; that as God is righteous and just, in taking what sort of persons he please, as the subjects of his mercy, *Exo.* 33. 19. *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy*, so in like manner is God righteous and just, in making whom he please the subjects of his wrath and condemnation; even *some of the circumcised seed of* Abraham, *according to the flesh*, the subjects of his bindning and hardning; as being such, who had not (as *Calvin* saith on *vers.* 31.) complyed with those terms prescribed and authorized by God for justification, but rebelling against the same; so he; how Gods rejecting and reprobating such willfull rejecters of him, his grace and mercy, patience, and long sufferings, in his unwearied applications to them, was emphatically held forth, in his proceedings with *Pharaoh*, which is now the subject before us: and that these proceedings of God on both sides, are the effects of an eternal decree of election and reprobation from the begin-

ning,

ning, is granted; and that this decree of reprobation is subservient to Gods decree of election and salvation; and is as conducible to the salvation of men as any other decree whatsoever: and S. *Paul* made use of Gods decree of reprobation to promote his own salvation, 1 *Cor.*9.27. *I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest when I have preached to others I my self should be a castaway.*

I might add by way of illustration, that the penal part of the laws of the nation, are as serviceable to deter men from offending, as the preceptory and positive laws are.

But I shall come to the words more closely, which divides themselves into these two parts.

1. The preface in these words, *for the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh.*

2. We have the matter and saying it self, spoken unto *Pharaoh* by way of threatning, *for this very cause have I raised thee up, to make my power known in thee: and that my name might be declared in all the earth.*

Before I come to the matter and saying it self, which will require some stay upon it a while, I shall speak a few words to the preface, which is the Apostles; *for the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh.*

And as to the preface, I shall speak a few words to these four circumstances.

1. As to the connexion of these words with the former.

2. The author of these words.

3. The subject to whom.

4. The time when these words were spoken; the consideration whereof may reflect some light upon the place.

1. As to the coherence or connexion of the words appearing

appearing in this particle (*for*), which seems to couple these words with the former, there are two opinions about these words.

1. Some think this (*for*) is a relative to *verse* 14.

2. Others think, that it is a relative to the words immediatly going before: I think we may be at liberty to take them either way: if it relates to the 14. *verse*, then it runneth thus, *is there unrighteousness in God, Godforbid; for the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh*: God is not unrighteous in condemning unbelievers who are contemners of his grace; as the Jews are to whom he speaks; *for the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh*: meaning, that Gods proceedings with *Pharaoh*, a stubborn and impenitent unbeliever even to destruction, is a just argument, that God is righteous in so proceeding with others in the like capacity, and so with whom he please: and the connexion thus considered doth agree to the Apostles conclusion, *vers.* 18. *so then he shews mercy to whom he will, and whom he will he hardens.*

But suppose we make the connexion with *verse* 16. *it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but in God that sheweth mercy, for the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh*; then it follows thus, that the laws, terms, and conditions upon which men are justified, are not moulded or framed by men though never so zealously bent and intent that way, but by and from God only, who is the donor; because *the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh*, meaning that inasmuch as God claimeth a just and unquestionable right to condemn whom he please, he hath the same right to save whom he please; so that the way by which the Apostle clears Gods righteousness in his proceedings with Jews and Gentiles, is from

his undoubted right thereunto: God is not unrighteous in justifying the gentiles by faith, neither is he unrighteous in condemning, and hardning the obstinate unbelieving Jews, because he was righteous in so proceeding with *Pharaoh* upon like grounds of disobedience: no man ever questioned the righteousnesse of Gods proceedings with *Pharaoh*, but justified him in it; therefore the Apostle makes him here a president, *Pharaoh* being the first born of rebellious unbelievers and obstinate disobeyers of God, and a type of all gospel-disobeyers to the worlds end: and so his proceedings with him a pattern of Gods proceedings with such to the worlds end: as in like manner when God declares his sole love and approbation to *Abraham*, upon his believing, he doth also declare his good liking to all such like believers in all succeding generations; *Abraham* the first-born of believing and obedient souls, he is the father of obedience, as *Pharaoh* was the father of disobedience, not that the children of these two grand heads are in degree equal to *Abraham* in faith, or *Pharaoh* in disobedience, but their faith and their disobedience are of the same *species* that their fathers was, as *Abraham* may have many sons or children who comes not to equalize him in the degree of his faith, provided it be of the same kinde, even so may *Pharaoh* have sons who may be heirs and lyable to the same hardning and condemning, who notwithstanding have not disobeyed to the degree of *Pharaohs* disobedience; and it is a certain truth, that amongst all people and persons that have been since *Pharaohs* time, none ever came so near to the degree of *Pharaohs* disobedience, as these Jews, to whom the Apostle is speaking, as afterwards I shall demonstrate

monstrate by the circumstances of them both: so that from this casual word (*for*), we may easily gather, that this instance of *Pharaoh* is not forreign to the Apostles businesse in hand; but it doth suit with it, to help to carry on his designe in vindication of the righteousnesse of God, both in shewing mercy and in hardning.

The second circumstance to be taken notice of, is the speaker of these words which is here appropriated to the Scriptures, the *Scripture saith unto Pharaoh*, which consideration (by the way) may be of instruction to us, of the divine authority of the Scriptures; for notwithstanding these words are the words of God, yet the Apostle saith, *the Scripture saith*, *I have raised thee up to make my power known*: what God speaks and what the Scripture saith, are the same with the Apostle, and so it is elsewhere; see *Gal.* 3.22. where he saith, the Scriptures hath concluded all in unbelief, which the same Apostle appropriates to God, *Rom.* 11. 32. So 1 *Timot.* 5.18. *the Scripture saith*, *thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the oxe*, which are a part of Gods words: I must take up this by the way, that sayings of God, and sayings of Scripture are of equal authority, and it must needs be so, because the sayings of Scripture are the breathings of God by his spirit, in his servants: see what *Peter* saith to this 2d *Peter.* 1. *last verse* 2. *Timothy.* 3: but why seeing Gods sayings, and sayings of Scripture are the same, doth the Apostle rather choose to say here, *the Scripture saith*, rather then *God saith*, as before *verse* the 15. I answer, the Apostle might choose his way to declare it, that he might provoke the Jews to consult and consider the whole passage, as they had it in their law; which also

did

did so greatly concern them; and for the same reason doth he so often use this dialect, *the Scripture saith*, as *Rom.* 10. 11. *chap.* 11. 2. and many other places.

2. *It* is considerable, that whilst he is saying that *the Scripture saith*; he so rendreth it in the present tense, he therein gives the Jews to understand, that this saying is a standing word, not only spoken, but speaking, it is a speaking Oracle: what was said to *Pharaoh* still speaketh in all ages (*the Scripture saith*).

I will only add a word of instruction, see the choice esteem the holy Apostle had for the Scriptures; whilst he reckons the Scripture sayings, and the sayings of God equal, Gods faithful servants in all ages have been distinguished by this; their worthy esteem of the Scriptures both in Old and New Testement, and so had Jesus Christ himself, let us try our selves by this rule.

2. Here is a rule for all preachers, the Scripture saith, *the preacher saith well*, whilst he saith the Scripture saith, in testimony to what he speaks, *thus it is written.*

The third circumstance to be considered is the subject to whom spoken to *Pharaoh*, worthy our consideration upon a threefold account.

1. It was the common name of all the kings of *Egypt* successively, but this was not that *Pharaoh* which shewed that kindeness to *Joseph*, nor he that appointed the midwives to slay the male-children, this *Pharaoh* takes another way, for *Moses* was 80 years old at this time; *Exo.* 7. 7.

2. As to this *Pharaoh*, he was an imperious proud man, his power was great as he was king of *Egypt*, he had a vast strength above other nations, and as

his power was, so his heart was great; he acknowledged none in heaven nor earth above him, as appeareth by his words, *chap.* 5.2. *who is the Lord that I should obey him: I know not the Lord*, or as *Ainsworth* reads it, *Jehovah is not revealed to me*: *Pharaoh* was a man much trusting to and leaning on Magicians and Sorcerers, with which that land abounded above all lands: here was those *Iames* & *Iamebrise* who (as the Apostle saith) *withstood Moses*: but that *Pharaoh* was wholely ignorant of *Jehovah*, as to a bear knowledge, few think; and there may be some reasons given, that *Pharaoh* must needs know him, though he stubbornly and wilfully withstood him, being thereunto seduced by the Magitians.

3. This *Pharaoh* is considered as a type and head of all the great persecutors of Gods people, as we may perceive from the prophets, where Gods enemies are threatned under the names of *Pharaoh* and *Egypt*: see *Esa.* 30. *Ezek.* 31. the great man of sin is called *Pharaoh*, and the place of his seat *Egypt*, *Revela.* 11.8. *Sodom* for all debauchery and prophanesse, *Egypt* for oppression and persecution; so that *Pharaoh* is to be understood as a head and leader of disobedience.

The 4th circumstance to be considered, is the time when these words were spoken to him, and that is plain, if well considered; it was *after the sixth plague*, the plague of the botches and boyls; which (as some think) were plague sores, whereof many died, and so this plague was the more dreadful and amazing; yet in this plague *Pharaoh* himself is preserved alive: that this was the time, and not before, we may finde by the scope of the context; we finde not one word like this before; the

consideration

consideration whereof will reflect light upon this passage, which doth inform us, that God had received very high provocations against *Pharaoh*, before he thus speaks to him in this severe threatning. Thus I have opened the preface, and now I come to the words themselves.

Ver. 14. *Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared in all the earth.*

1. The nature of these words are minatory, or a threatning.

Before I proceed to give my sence and understanding upon these words, it may not be altogether needlesse to present the common received Opinions, grounded upon these words of God to *Pharaoh*, which are as followeth; that God before he created this *Pharaoh*, did purpose and peremptorily decree his state and condition of sin and punishment; or that God made him on purpose to shew his power in his destruction; and that this might be justly executed upon him, he provoked him to be disobedient to all his following applications to him; *or that God intentially hardned* his heart, in order to justification.

And 2ly, Not only so, but that Gods proceedings with *Pharaoh* was a president and pattern of his first, and second proceedings with all reprobates to the worlds end, as he, so they are prepared unavoidably before they are born to their own eternal ruine, without any possibillity of escape: that those who are under an eternal decree of Reprobation, are under an impossibillity of repenting or believing; in order to salvation; These are the

common notions deduced from this passage of *Pharaoh*; though every one will not so freely declare them, as some of them have done in my hearing.

Now by the Lords help, my designe is, and my endeavour shall be, to set free this portion of Scripture from this unpleasing service in which it is prest to serve, contrary to its genius. I have already minded you in my former proceedings upon this Context, that our Apostle was far enough in this Epistle or Chapter from a designe to assert or maintain absolute and personal Election or reprobation from eternity; neither could such a doctrine at all contribute to his business in hand, which was to convince the Jews of their horrid sin in rejecting and killing Jesus Christ, and rejecting the Gospel; it was not a likely way, nor a convincing argument to tell them, that they were necessitated to do what they did, and be what they were, by the power of an absolute decree from eternity concerning them: would any parent having a disobedient son, and taking bad courses, use this argument to reduce him, to tell him he was decreed and ordained to be what he is, and do what he do, by an absolute and unavoidable decree of reprobation from eternity, I leave the Judicious Reader to consider; I shall have occasion to speak more of this afterwards.

Now in order to Explication, let us enquire into these Five following Circumstances.

1. To what end doth our Apostle now bring in this passage of *Pharaoh*, and how doth it accomodate his present designe to clear up the righteousnesse of God against the Jews Objection, which is his present work?

2. I shall open the nature of Gods purpose and intention

intention concerning *Pharaoh*, that is to say, whether Gods purposes are absolute or conditional, because the Apostle renders it, *for this cause have I raised thee up.*

3. Shew how God raised up *Pharaoh*, or what God did for *Pharaoh* called here *raising him up.*

4. What is that power that God threatens to put forth towards *Pharaoh* in his dealings with him.

5. What part or parts of Gods Name is declared in the world, or throughout the earth, in destroying *Pharaoh*, after that way and manner which he did.

As to Gods hardning *Pharaoh* I shall not speak to it on this ver. because it will fall in more properly in the handling the next verse where that is expresst.

1. How doth this passage of *Pharaoh* accomodate the Apostles designe in justifying Gods righteousness, which is his present work, in answer to the second Objection?

I answer, his designe in bringing in this example and instance of *Pharaoh*, is to shew, that God is righteous in rejecting the stubborn, disobedient, rebellious Jews, who had rejected the many applications of God to them, that is, deprive them of all their outward priviledges and the good promised them; and to cause them to cease to be a body politique, but to be a people dispers't up and down the world, which is now their present state: the Apostle argueth thus, if Gods will and pleasure was (and that most righteous) to threaten *Pharaoh* an obstinate rebellious person, that if he persisted in his rebellion he would destroy him with a most prodigious destruction, which also was performed accordingly thereupon; he may

justly do so with others of the like kinde, and consequently with you; the Jews whose stubbornesse and rebellion against God, in order to Christ and the Gospel, doth clearly resemble that of *Pharaoh*; what God did by *Pharaoh* he may do by you, for the same sins, if you persist in them as he did; this is the Apostles Argument.

And 2ly, the Apostle might well bring in *Pharaoh*, he being in order the first and most notorious in that sin of disobedience against God with a high hand; he was the head & father and first-born of all that race, as *Abraham* was the head & father of all true believers; and therefore the Apostle cites Gods dealing with the father to instruct all his following children, of like strain, what they must look for at his hands: *Pharaoh* is here brought in as a proper parallel instance, in his sin and punishment, in these five circumstances.

1. God sent a loving message to *Pharaoh* king of *Egypt*, to desire him to let his first-born son *Israel* go out of his land; so God sent a loving message to the Jews to invite them to believe in his only begotten son Jesus Christ; but as *Pharaoh* refused in slighting terms, so did they.

2. As *Pharaoh* was a cruel oppressor to Gods Son the *Israelites*, so were the Jews to Gods only begotten Son Jesus Christ, they were cruel unto him; and that *Israels* being in *Egypt* did type out the state and condition of Christ is plain, See *Matth.* 2. 25. *that the Scripture might be fullfilled, I have called my son out of Egypt.*

3. As God did not cease in *Pharaohs* rejecting the first message, but sends several more, even so did God to the Jews, he sent servant after servant, till they misus'd them, and at last they kill the son; as we have it in the parable.

4. As

4. As *Pharaoh* was hardned and ſtrengthned in his rebellion againſt God, by his long-ſuffering & patience toward him, ſo it was with the Jews, for *he ſtretched out his hand to a gainſaying and a rebellious people.*

5. As God at laſt ſealed up *Pharaoh* in his obduratenesſe and impenitency, ſo did he do with the Jews; foraſmuch as they had ſhut their eyes and ears, God at laſt gives them up to a judicial blindneſſe, as we reade *Act.*28.26,27. ſo that the intent of bringing *Pharaoh* upon the ſtage at this time, is to demonſtrate,

1. That God is at liberty to deſtroy what ſort of perſons he will, whether debauched, profane ſinners of the Gentiles, meerly for ſuch their wickedneſſe, or whether Jews and Gentiles for rebelling againſt the goſpel and the tenders thereof.

2. This liberty of his doth iſſue in this, that he will pitch upon (without reſpect of perſons) Jews and Gentiles, who are wilfull rejecters of his grace and mercy in Jeſus Chriſt, to be the ſubjects of reprobation; as well the Jews who are obſervant of *Moſes* Law as the idolatrous gentiles; ſo that the Apoſtle doth not here bring *Pharaoh* as a type of perſonal reprobation, but a ſpecifical of ſuch a kind, qualified & fitted for deſtruction, as he was not perſonal reprobation, for theſe Reaſons.

1. That would not have ſtccomodated his grand deſigne in this Epiſtle, Chapter and Context, as I have ſaid before, which was to exalt and magnifie faith in Chriſt, as the alone condition, law and terms of juſtification, without the works of the law. Now if the Apoſtles deſigne had been to aſſert and maintain perſonal Election and Repro-

bation without any regard to qualifications of the creature, but the only pleasure of God, he need not strive as he doth about faith and works.

2. This was not the way to humble the Jews for their unbelief and crucifixion of Jesus Christ, and rejecting the gospel, which was his present work, as I have said before.

3. If his designe had been to exalt personal Election and Reprobation, without terms and conditions, this Instance of *Pharaoh* would not have conduced to his end, because all the world will grant, that *Pharaoh* was destroied for his disobedience and open rebellion against God, and abusing his long-suffering and mercy, in his many applications to him; the man hath not yet been heard of who hath not justified God in his proceedings with *Pharaoh*.

4. Besides, it is undeniably plain, that the Apostle brings in this instance of *Pharaoh* as a type of national not personal reprobation, inasmuch as it is by the Apostle applyed to the nation of the Jews.

5. Whatever we may gather or conclude by circumstances, yet we have no Scripture in the whole book of God that speaks any thing of *Pharaoh* himself as reprobated to eternal misery; all Gods threatnings mentioned and executed, referred to his temporal overthrow, at least in the sea, as the like was before spoken concerning *Esau* and *Ishmael*; though consequently it must follow that he dying in impenitency, it can amount to no less then perdition to eternity; yet (I say) the Scriptures doth not convincingly assert it in any place, though it is granted on all hands, that *Pharaoh* is exhibited as a type of those who shall eternally perish in abusing Gods grace and mercy: so that we see, this

instance

instance of *Pharaoh* did accomodate the Apostle, if righly understood; in vindicating the righteousness of *God*, whilst he is rejecting the rebellious Jews.

The second thing to be enquired into is, how far the purpose and intent of *God* must be understood to be absolute; and how far conditional? whether this purpose of *God* as to *Pharaohs* destruction was so precise and absolute, that no interveniences of *Pharaoh* could prevent or hinder it? or whether it were conditional, that is to say, that if *Pharaoh* did repent, and at last quietly yield to let *Israel* depart his land and not pursue them, whether then this wrath of *God* had not been diverted?

The answer of this question is of great concernment to a right understanding of this passage, in answer whereunto I shall speak a few words in order to the general opinion of men about this question: It is commonly objected, that *Pharaoh* from first to last of Gods sending to him, was in no capacity to repent, but shut up by God in a state of impenitency. I shall reply more fully to that, upon *ver.* 18. yet at present I shall speak a few words; and by the way I say this, that to suppose that God by vertue of his eternal decree of reprobation, had laid upon *Pharaoh* an unavoidable necessity of rebelling against him, is a high charge against the most pure and righteous God, and little less then blasphemy to say or think, God doth not necessitate that to be done which his soul abhors to be done: but some moderate men will plead thus; that he did foresee *Pharaohs* rebellion and impenitency: I answer, and it is not my judgment alone, that God cannot in a proper and strict sence be said to foresee any thing, for he sees all at once as done; but were it understood as fore-sight in God, Gods

fore-sight

fore-sight of things done or to be done in the world, doth not necessitate these things to be done: this was a received maxim of old amongst the learned, and it may be as well said, that God fore-saw that he might have repented; and those mercies that God used with him were not only proper and effectual mercies to draw *Pharaoh* to repentance, but did to some degree effect it by fits; for he did sometimes yield and promise to obey.

But to come closer to the matter; I must say, that unless Gods dealings with *Pharaoh* was different from his dealings with all nations, persons and people, throughout all ages, there must be supposed a condition in this threatning to him from God, at least implyed, if not expresst, that is to say, that unless *Pharaoh* would speedily and willingly let *Israel* depart his land, he would make known his avenging power in his destruction: now that this is the general terms of Gods proceedings is plain, whether as to temporal or eternal destructions, and sometimes the conditions are expresst, as *Jer.* 18. 7, 8. *If I pronounce evil against a nation or people, to pluck up, pull down, or destroy, if they repent, I will repent*: so it is supposed on the contrary, as to *Eli's* house, 1 *Sam.* 2. 30. *I said, indeed his house should continue for ever; but now far be it from me*; there was a decree gone out, *Zeph.* 2. 2. yet they are exhorted to repent before the decree bring forth: *God swore to* Israel *to give them the land of Canaan*, but it seems it was conditional, *Numb.* 14. and so in general, there is a condition in Gods highest promises and threatnings: and why should we think this to *Pharaoh* had no conditions annexed to it? we grant, that the conditions are not always expresst, but Gods threatnings seem to be positive,

positive, as in *Niniveh's* case; *Jonas* himself thought it had been positive; as appears by his discontent at the appearance of the condition: have we not positive sayings and determinations, that such and such shall not inherit heaven? 1 *Cor.* 6. *Ephes.* 5. yet they had a condition, *except they repent*: and have we not reason to believe, that Gods purpose unto, and concerning *Pharaoh*, is of the nature of all the rest in Scripture? but we have some who will venture to tell us, that God hath two wills, a secret and a revealed will or purpose; and that albeit by his revealed will he would have all men saved, yet his secret will and purpose is, that the far greater number shall eternally perish: to which I reply, that were it granted, that God hath two wills, a secret and a revealed, yet this I finde that Gods revealed will is the most severe and hasty, and his secret will most mercifull; as appears by all the former instances: his revealed will was, that *Niniveh* should be destroyed, whilst his secret will was, that it should remain, if it did repent.

2ly, As to answer this question, I do say, that God did manifest, that there was a condition in the bowels of that threatning to *Pharaoh*; and that God did seek and labour with *Pharaoh* to draw him to repentance, and that by proper and suitable means; the very tendency whereof, was to lead to repentance, namely, those miraculous judgments on the one hand, and those deliverances on the other: these did both tend to draw *Pharaoh* to a compliance with God: it is a saying of the synod of *Dort*, *that we must more consider the efficacy of the means in themselves, then their successes*; Gods means was sufficient, though the end was not effected;

fected: but some will further pleade, could not God have so handled *Pharaoh* if he had pleased, that he should have complyed, and let *Israel* go, without all those plagues and destruction at last: this question requires a double answer.

1. That the power of God simply considered in it self, without that regulation which it admits of, could have effected it, for had God refused to take off any of those judgments till he had permitted *Israel* to depart, doubtless it had been done rather then *Pharaoh* would have suffered his whole land to be destroyed.

But 2ly, If we speak of the power of God regulated, managed or acted forth by his wisdome and understanding, and in conjunction with his righteousnes, he was not able, or had not power to work *Pharaoh* to repentance, or prevent destruction; for God cannot do any thing unwisely or unrighteously, by the same rule, as he cannot ly nor deny himself, *Esa.* 5. *as to his vineyard he could do no more then he had done*; whereas in a strict sence he could have done much more, sent many more prophets, even without number: but it must be understood, he could not honourably, wisely and righteously have done more: we have such another instance, 2 *Cron.* 36. 15, 16. without remedy God had left himself no more means to heal them, so *Mark.* 6. 5. *Christ could do no mighty works*: such a kinde of speech we have, *Act.* 27. though God had given S. *Paul* the lives of all that sailed with him in the ship, yet (saith he) *except ye abide in the ship ye cannot be saved*: God is not bound to force men to repentance against their wills, or beyond an usual way; so God could have kept *Adam* and the Angels from falling, by his absolute pow-

er,

er, without this regulation by wiſdome and counſel: but it is further objected, that if *Gods* purpoſe as to *Pharaoh*, and others, be conditional, then there ſeems not to be ſo much weight or dread in *Gods* threatnings, for the execution of them is ſuſpended upon the creatures repentance; is not this ſome blemiſh to *Gods* honour? I anſwer, that there is a ſence wherein all the counſels and purpoſes of God are abſolute and peremptory, unalterable and unchangable, and are like the great mountains that cannot be removed by men nor Angels; as for inſtance *Gods* eternal purpoſe is to ſave all that continue in faith and love to the end, this is unchangable like *God* himſelf.

2. That all unbelieving rebellious rejecters of his goſpel-grace ſhall periſh eternally, this decree is as abſolute: theſe are eſtabliſhed by a decree that cannot be reverſed: and thus *Gods* purpoſe to *Pharaoh* muſt ſtand, which was this, that if he did ſtill exalt himſelf againſt *God*, and not let *Iſrael* go, then his great power ſhould certainly be ſeen in his deſtruction: the condition of his repentance is implyed not expreſt.

The third Particular we are to enquire after, is, what *God* did to *Pharaoh* called here, *raiſing him up*? what doth this *raiſing up* refer unto? there are many underſtandings and interpretations upon theſe words; ſome underſtands this *raiſing up* to refer to his creation, others underſtand this *raiſing up* to be his making him *King of Egypt*: but I ſhall be much ſwayed by the original words, and the conſent of the generallity of antient Authors herein: the greek word tranſlated *raiſed thee up*, ſignifieth (as the learned in the greek tells us) *to raiſe out of ſome low ſtate and condition*, ſometimes out

of

of ſome ſickneſs or diſeaſe: ſo it is uſed, *Jam.* 5. 15. ſometimes out of the grave: *Pharaoh* was (in a ſence) often in the grave, or dead as we ſay, for his rebellion reiterated: the hebrew words from whence the Apoſtle draws this, Latined (*ſtare feci*) is read thus: *I have made thee to ſtand*, the vulgar lattin reades it, *I have ſuſtained thee*; the Septuagint reades, *thou wert kept alive*; the Chaldee Paraphraſe reads, *for this cauſe have I endured thee or patiently born with thee*: to which agreeth *verſe* 22. *he endureth with long-ſuffering*; God had raiſed him up, and delivered him from ſix ſeveral plagues and ſtill ſaved him in perſon alive: the generallity of interpreters as well *Calviniſts* as others, do receive this as the moſt proper reading: *I have made thee to ſtand, I have kept or ſuſtained thee*; thou haſt often been laid low under the ſentence of death, but upon *Moſeſes* interceſſion I have raiſed thee up, I have reſcued thee, I have forgiven thy diſobedience, and tryed thee again; yet with this purpoſe, that if ſtill after all this, thou ſhould'ſt remain obſtinate and rebellious, then the ſtroke ſhall be the heavier at laſt: my power ſhall be ſeen in thy deſtruction, which ſhall be ſo prodigious, that all the world ſhall ring of it; *it ſhall be known in all the earth*: now that this *raiſing up Pharaoh* could not refer to his creation or raiſing him to be king, as ſome would have it, but muſt reſpect the proceedings and dealings of God with him in this preſent treaty, appears from theſe reaſons.

1. Becauſe this minatory declaration of God, is not ſent to *Pharaoh* till after the ſix plagues; now had this ſpeech reſpected his creation, or making him king, or any other precedent act of God to him

him, this message would have been applyed to him in the beginning of this treaty, when God first sends *Moses* to him, as an argument to dismisse his people, but we have not one word of it then: but now when God had exercised much patience and long suffering under six plagues, and delivering *Pharaoh* under all, he now speaks of *raising him up*, or *making him stand*: so that we have good ground to judge, that this *raising up* respects some latter, past, special favour, extended to him.

2ly, That this *raising up* must be so understood, and not of raising him from nothing in creation, or to the kingship, because there could be no argument drawn from such his former raising up, to vindicate Gods righteousnesse in his so notorious destruction: it would have sounded very strange and harsh, to have run thus, *for this very purpose have I created thee, that I might shew my power in thy destruction*, or, *for this cause have I made thee King, that I might so signally destroy thee*: but to reade it thus, *for this cause have I heard thy requests by* Moses *and* Aaron, *and taken off my plagues from thee and thy land*; for this very purpose, that if after all this favour shown to thee thou still continue obstinate, thy judgment might be the heavier and more remarkable; thus understood, God makes him often and reitarated favours shown to *Pharaoh*: and his reiterated refusal an aggravating argument to his greater destruction: and I appeal to each judicious reader, if this construction doth not fall in fully with Gods common proceedings with men in all ages: for this reade *Judg.* 10. 12. where God makes his often delivering *Israel*, an argument to forsake them who remained still disobedient.

3. Such

3. Such a *raising up*, as we are speaking of, by multiplyed favours upon *Pharaoh*, doth most clearly comport with the Apostles designe in representing Gods dealings with *Pharaoh*, a platform for his proceedings with the unbelieving Jews; for God aggravates the sin and just condemnation of the Jews from his many gracious applications to them in convincing miracles, and prophets, see *Matt.* 11. *Matt.* 23. 34. *behold I send you prophets, wisemen, and scribes; and some of them you shall, or will kill, that upon you may come all the blood from* Abel *to Zacharias:* from hence it is, that *Jerusalem* and the temple is left desolate to this day; and this is the ground to aggravate their condemnation, not their birth or former priviledges, but their latter, and more immediate favours received from God in the last tenders of his grace: this was the case with *Pharaoh*, Gods raising him and preserving him alive under the former judgments, is the foot of this conditional threatning.

4. If we should understand this *raising up* to be his creation, and reade it according to that construction, that *Pharaoh* even before he was born, was decreed and ordained of God to be a vessel of wrath, that is to say, that God created *Pharaoh*, for this same purpose, that he might destroy him with a remarkable destruction; how strangely will this represent God to men, whose tender mercies are over all his works, to be more cruel then any of his creatures are to their kinde; for all creatures are propense in their affections to those who receive their beings from them, or are propagated by them; they have bowels of pity towards them: yet by such a construction, God who is the perfection of all bowels of pity is presented, implacably

bly bent upon the eternal ruine of his off-spring, even to exquisite torments; and that the greater part of mankinde lineally descended from him by *Adam*, who was the son of God, *Luke.* 3.38. and this before personall or actuall sin by them committed: this horrid imputation upon Gods name and nature, by such a construction, may induce us to incline to the other interpretation of Gods *raising up Pharaoh.*

The *4th* particular which is by course to be enquired into, is, this power that conditionally is made known in *Pharaoh*, in case he remains obstinate; some are ready to think, that this power respects an inward power exercised in keeping *Pharaoh* in his sinfull rebellion, or hardening his heart; but I hope I need not speak to that: the power here intended is most clearly to be understood the power of Gods wrath in *Pharaohs* destruction in the Red Sea, this power of God is exalted in that Song of *Moses*, *Ex.*15.6. *thy right hand, O God, is become glorious in power*, speaking of *Pharaohs* destruction in the sea; notwithstanding *Pharaohs* greatnesse and power, yet the power of God is above him, and can easily overthrow him: this is that power which God speaks of in the threatning which is seen in the execution, and that this is the power we may easily perceive by the repetition of it again, *vsr.*22. of this *9th of the Romans*, *What if God willing to shew his wrath and make his power known?* these two phrases of *wrath* and *power* are exegetical, and doth one expound the other; Gods power is seen in the letting forth his wrath, as is also understood, *Psa.*90.11. *who knows the power of thy wrath?* so that we have thus much in this passage, that if *Pharaoh* would not comply with God, but

persist in his stubbornnesse, then, as hitherto he had largely tasted of Gods long-suffering and mercy, so he should also as deeply feel his power, crushing him in his destruction; So much for the fourth particular.

The Fifth and last propounded to be spoke unto is, how the name of God is declared in *Pharaohs* destruction, and what part or parts of his name: by the Name of God in Scripture is sometimes understood his power, *his Name is great unto the ends of the earth*; God did not only designe the destruction of *Pharaoh* upon his obstinacy, but to get himself a name and a common name; Gods special Name is that which he is known by to *Israel in Egypt*, and to *Pharaoh*, See *Exo.*3.15. *the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob*; and *chap.*5..to *Pharaoh*, *the God of Israel*, or *the God of the hebrews*; that God is by name the *God of the hebrews, and of his people*, shall be declared: *the Nations shall afterwards say, oh! what a God hath the Hebrews* that hath so eminently appeared for them; this we understand may be the special Name of God intended in our Text, his great love to his people; he is called, *the God of Israel, or of the hebrews.*

2ly, Suppose we take this Name of God for his common name, recorded *Exod.*34.6. then it respects Gods proceedings with *Pharaoh.*

There are three syllables of Gods Name loudly declared in Gods dealings with *Pharaoh.*

1. The attribute of his *mercy*, his favour, his preventing grace, in sparing him for so long a time, in his oppressing of his people; as also in delivering him from so many plagues, whenas he might have cut him off at his first slighting Reply

to

to *Moſes, Who is the Lord that I ſhould obey him? I will not let Iſrael go.*

2. We have magnified in Gods dealings to *Pharaoh* the attribute of his *long-ſuffering* and patience: God was eminently known in this attribute of his long-ſuffering after receiving many affronts from him, therefore the Apoſtle takes ſpecial notice of that *ver.* 22. *he endured with much long-ſuffering the veſſels of wrath fitted for deſtruction.*

3. The attribute of his righteouſneſs is magnified in his dealings with *Pharaoh, that he will not always clear the guilty*: God ſhews his juſtice, righteouſneſe, holyneſs, in this eminent paſſage of *Pharaoh*, as we have it in that ſong made upon that account, *Exo.* 15. 11. this is imputed to God amongſt the reſt to be *glorious in holyneſs*: Thus I have briefly paſt over the 17th *verſe*, by way of explication, I ſhall proceed to the explication of the 18th *verſe* alſo, and then draw up thoſe doctrines that ariſeth from both.

CHAP. X.

Plainly explaining how, and in what sence God may be said to harden mens hearts, in like manner how God is said to shew mercy.

Ver. 18. *Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.*

THe Apostle having in answer to the Jews second objection been vindicating Gods righteousness in justifying the heathen by faith, and hardening and rejecting the circumcision for unbelief and disobedience to the Gospel; which answer in the two branches of it he had been prosecuting of by the help of two antient sayings of God, one to *Moses Exo.* 33. 19. the other to *Pharaoh, chap.* 9. 16. he now in the verse before us proceeds to draw up the whole of both into a doctrinal result and conclusion, in these words (*so then*) or *therefore he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardneth*: that is to say, it clearly appears from the premises, that God is at liberty and hath unquestionable right to make his own terms, upon which he will shew mercy, or upon what terms he will reject: at our first view of these words our Apostle seems to represent God in his proceedings with his creatures as an absolute monarch, who proceeds and rules by an arbitrary power, his own will being his law: and so tyed to no law nor conditions; and thus also *Daniel* represents God, *Dan.* 4. 35. *he doth whatever he will in heaven and earth;*

earth: and that this is the power of an absolute Monarch, appears from what is declared of that great heathen Monarch *Dan.* 5. 19. *whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive, whom he would he set up, and whom he would he pulled down*; and this is the character of that great king and Monarch, *the man of sin*, of whom we reade *Dan.* 11. three times over expreſt, *vers.* 3. 16. and 36. *he shall do according to his will*: thus and much more is God repreſented to do according to his will, *to shew mercy to whom he will, and harden whom he will*: from whence ſome gather perſonal peremptory and abſolute election and reprobation from his own *will*, without any law or condition, with reſpect to the creature; but although the Apoſtle doth thus ſeem to repreſent God as proceeding in mercy and judgment with his creatures as an abſolute Monarch; yet I ſhall ſhow you wherein there is an apparent difference between ſuch an arbitrary proceeding and the proceedings of God, though according to his *will* in five circumſtances.

1. God in his proceedings with men cannot *will* or act any thing but what in it ſelf is righteous, juſt and equal: whereas it is very incident to men in ſuch a capacity to err, whilſt they rule according to their will; and therefore it hath been the endeavour of all nations to bound the wills of their Governours by laws and conditions; men themſelves being judges, cannot impeach Gods will with any injuſtice or unequallity: God appeals to men, *Ezek.* 18. *whether his ways were not juſt and equal*: it was *Abrahams* maxim, *that the judge of all the earth will do right*, to ſay, that whatever God *willeth* or acteth, is juſt, is a great truth, and worthy of our faith, and greatly tends to Gods glory:

but to say of things unequal in themselves, yet done or acted by God, are just, is a great dishonour to him, Gods will cannot be swayed to injustice.

2. Gods will differs from mens will, because it admits of councel, *Ephe.* 1. 11. *he doth all things according to the counsel of his own will.*

3. Gods ruling by his will differs from mens ruling by their wills; for men in that capacity are understood to rule by their wills without a law, but Gods will is formed into a law, both as to his mercy, and as to his justice; therefore we finde little or no difference between Gods will & Gods law, they are taken one for another in Scripture, to do Gods word, and to do Gods will is the same thing, therefore the 19th *verse* of this *chapter* by some is read instead of *who hath resisted his will? who hath resisted his word?*

4. Men commonly ruling by their will do conceal their will, till the time of execution of it, but Gods will is declared before-hand both to warn on the one hand and encourage on the other.

5. Persons ruling according to their wills amongst men, are not stedfast, they may will one thing to day, and another to morrow; those who are the subjects of their favour or wrath, are not always the same, but Gods will is the same to day, to morrow, and for ever; the subjects of Gods favour and wrath are the same yesterday, to day, and forever; his will is, that *whosoever seeth the son, and believeth in him should have eternal life*: and this is the same still, and his will is, that *he that rejects the son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him*: and thus considered, God may be said *to shew mercy to whom he will*, yet shew mercy

to

to none but such as believe in Jesus Christ: and he may be said *to harden whom he will*; and yet to harden none but those who first harden themselves; for after the same manner doth the Apostle speak of the spirits distributions; he divides to every man severally as he will, yet upon conditions of coveting and seeking of it.

But before I proceed, there is a question which I would speak a few words unto, in order to clearing our passage, that is, why the Apostle rather choseth to declare, *God shewing mercy to whom he will*, and *hardning whom he will*, then to declare Gods shewing mercy to believers, and hardning impenitent sinners and rejecters of the gospel.

I answer, he speaks after this manner to silence the proud arrogant Jews, who would impose upon God, and teach him whom or what sort of people he should accept into his favour, and whom he should reject; these Jews had a tincture of proud *Pharaohs* spirit, who thought there was none above him, therefore to humble them, the Apostle doth assert Gods absolute supremacy and superintendency over man, he doth what he will: this was the occasion of this kinde of speaking at the first, *Exo.* 33. 19 to silence *Moses*, who seems to be so pertinatiously pleading with God for *Israel*, above all the nations of the world; besides God takes him off by telling him, *I will have mercy on whom I will*; in shewing mercy, I am not bound to give thee an account, though thou art my friend *Moses*: and after this manner doth *David* take off and silence the heathen, who in an undervaluing way were asking, where was his God? *David* to set God out of their reach, tells them, *Psal.* 115. 3. *our God is in the heavens, he hath done whatsoever he will*, or pleased.

2. He thus speaks, to show that the law and terms upon which God shews mercy to some, and hardens some, doth not arise from the creatures side, but hath the original from himself; it is founded in the breast of God, without the creatures contrivance or proposition of the creatures: terms of mercy and terms of wrath are founded in the breast of the most high.

3. He thus speaks to magnifie the righteousness of God, which was a great part of his present business, he that hath an undeniable right to *show mercy to whom he will*, and *harden whom he will*, cannot be charged with unrighteousness in his proceedings, though he justifie the heathen by faith, and reject the circumcision for unbelief and disobedience: thus the Apostle concludes that from Gods hardning *Pharaoh*, he hath a right to *harden whom he will*: the words are a conclusion made up of three circumstances.

1. That God had an unquestionable right to harden *Pharaoh*, or else it had not been done; that God proceeded rightly and righteously in his proceedings to, and with *Pharaoh*.

2. That God hath the same right of power to harden all such, as *Pharaoh* was, this none can question: he that righteously executes one for murther, may as righteously execute a thousand being such as he was.

3. It is supposed in this conclusion, that Gods will is to harden none but such as *Pharaoh* was, abusers of his mercy and long-suffering-grace in Christ, that is, his will is to harden those, who first harden themselves: I remember what a learned man saith upon this head, that every breach between God and the creature, begins first on the

creatures

creatures ſide, from the beginning to the end; *God at firſt made man upright, but he hath found out many inventions.*

This Doctrine hath been plentifully preached throughout the Scriptures, ſee 2 *Cron.* 15. 2. *the Lord is with you whilſt you are with him, if you forſake him, he will forſake you,* 2 *Cron.* 24. 20. *becauſe you have forſook the Lord, he hath forſook you*; ſo *Pro.* 1.24. if Chriſt *takes away the talent,* it is *from them who hide it,* & *Mat.* 25. the great breach between *God* and *Pharaoh* begun on *Pharaohs* ſide.

1. In his cruel perſecuting and oppreſſing his only people and firſt-born ſon *Iſrael.*

2. His ſlighting and contemning God himſelf, *chap.* 5. 2. the breach between God and *Iſrael,* the people to whom the Apoſtle ſpeaks, begun on their ſide; *Matt.* 22. *ver.* 2. 7. *chap.* 23. to the end. *ver.* 37. *Oh Jeruſalem how often would I have gathered you, but you would not.*

But for our more orderly proceedings, after the manner of an Expoſition, I ſhall firſt ſpeak ſomething in order to the Explication of theſe words, and thoſe circumſtances relative to them, and after that, lay down thoſe doctrinal Concluſions that doth riſe from them.

And in order to Explication, I ſhall enquire into Five Circumſtances.

1. What Mercy is here intended when the Apoſtle ſaith, *He hath mercy on whom he will.*

2. What is this hardening as to the nature of it.

3. How far was *God* concerned in hardning of *Pharaoh,* and likewiſe how far he is concerned in hardening of others in general, and what means *God* makes uſe of in hardening.

4. What was the time that *God* did properly take

take in hand to harden *Pharaoh*, was it an act from eternity, or in time?

5. Was *Pharaohs* hardening by *God* irreſiſtible by *Pharaoh*, and irrevocable by *God*? that is to ſay, was *Pharaoh* by vertue of *Gods* hardening his heart ſhut up under an impoſſibility of obtaining any degree of ſoftneſſe again.

The Anſwer to theſe Five Queſtions will give ſome light to the paſſage, therefore I ſhall ſpeak a few words to each of them in order, and chiefly to the third.

1. As to the Mercy here ſpoken of, it muſt needs refer to the mercy of juſtification and adoption, according to the ſcope of the Context, accepting perſons upon goſpel-terms, which terms are mercy and grace; as the Scriptures doth fully ſhew, *Rom.* 11.30,31. where the Apoſtle three times calls *Juſtification* by the name of *mercy*: ſo alſo *Epheſ.* 2.4. *God who is rich in mercy*: after this manner doth the Apoſtle ſpeak to *Titus*, *Tit.* 3. 5. and 1 *Peter* 1. 3. Gods goſpel-proceedings are ways of mercy: now the terms of this mercy is contrived by God himſelf without the propoſal of the creature: thus muſt the Apoſtle be here underſtood, where he ſaith, *he hath mercy on whom he will, whether Jews or gentiles*; all the circumciſion that obeyed the *Goſpel*, are ſaid, to have obtained mercy, that is, are juſtifyed.

2. What may we underſtand by hardning, *whom he will he hardneth*: The Apoſtle in this word alludeth to the phraſe ſo often made uſe of in the relation of *Pharaoh*: *Pharaoh hardened his heart*, ſometimes *Pharaoh* is ſaid to harden his own heart, and ſometimes *God* is ſaid *to harden his heart*: this kind of ſpeaking is metaphorical, alluding, as the Naturaliſts

turalliſts tells us, to ſome elementary bodyes; it is proper to ſteel, ſtones, and ſuch like bodyes to be hard, and the deſcription of them is by this, they reſiſt the touch; that which is very hard is known by this, it is not eaſily penitrated, it very hardly ſuffers an impreſſion, whereby the figure or outward ſhape ſuffers alterations; that heart is in like manner called in Scripture *a hard heart*, that reſiſts the touch, when no ordinary nor extraordinary means from God will enter, or make any impreſſion, neither promiſes nor threatnings, exhortations, inſtructions, reproofs nor corrections; no means neither mercys nor judgments take place upon him: upon this very conſideration is *Pharaohs* heart called *a hard heart*, becauſe he reſiſted the touch, when Gods kinde meſſages came to him, when Gods judgments were upon him they did not penitrate his heart, his heart did not ſuffer any alteration or impreſſion: we reade of Gods complaint of his people upon this account *Zacha. 7. 12. that they had made their hearts harder then an adamant.* And how did this appear, *they refuſed the law and words of God by the prophets*, they made no impreſſion: the word here tranſlated *hard* hath a threefold acceptation.

1. Sometimes to be heavy, drowſy, or ſlumbring, *Rom. 11. 7. the reſt were blinded or hardened*, and Doctor *Ainſworth* reades, inſtead of hard, *Pharaohs heart was made heavy.*

2ly, Sometimes the word is tranſlated *made ſtrong*, ſo *Exo. 8. 9. Pharaohs heart waxed ſtrong.*

But 3ly, and commonly, it is read *hardened*, as here; concerning hardneſſe of heart I can conceſs with the Calviniſts, who ſpeaks of a threefold hardneſſe of heart incident to men.

1. A

1. A natural hardneſs which every man hath naturally upon him, whereby he doth hardly ſuffer the touch of *Gods* word, or at moſt ſuffer it to make any impreſſion upon the heart: unconverted perſons have naturally impenitent hearts; therefore converſion is a *taking away the heart of ſtone and giving a heart of fleſh:* in converſion the heart is mollified, ſo as to receive the word, *Act.* 2. *their hearts could ſuffer a prick by the word.*

2. There is an acquired hardneſſe, there is a contracted hardneſſe even in thoſe who have had ſome ſoftneſſe; the Church complains of hardneſſe of heart, *Eſa.*63. 17. *why haſt thou hardened our hearts from thy fear?* therefore doth our Apoſtle, *Heb.* 3. exhort the Hebrews to *take heed of being hardened by the deceitfulneſſe of ſin.*

3. There is a hardneſſe which is called a judicial hardneſſe, that is, a hardneſſe, as a judgment from *God*, and this is the hardneſſe of heart ſpoken of, and intended in our Text, *whom he will he hardeneth*; this is the hardneſſe inflicted upon the Jews, which was threatned, *Eſa.* 6. and accompliſhed, *Act.*28.27.

But the third circumſtance requires moſt to be ſpoken unto, that is, how far *God* was concerned in hardning *Pharaohs* heart? to the end we might come at the truth in this head. I ſhall ſpeak to it negatively and affirmatively.

1. Shew you, what *God* did not do to *Pharaoh.*

1. *God* did not neceſſitate *Pharaoh* to be rebellious and hard hearted againſt him, by an eternal and abſolute decree, in order thereunto: the Scriptures ſaith not one word to that purpoſe any where; and thoſe who ſaith moſt that way, takes this hardening of *God*, to commence from *Gods* beginning

beginning of his treaty with him, when he ſaith, *I will harden his heart*, *chap.* 4.21. hardneſſe of heart in men is contrary to *Gods* nature, therefore not neceſſitated by him ſo to be: ſee how contrary it was to the nature of Jeſus Chriſt, of whom it is recorded, *Mark*, 3.5. *he grieved or mourned for the hardneſſe of their hearts*, which grief in Chriſt ſuppoſeth four things.

1. That Chriſt had done what he could to ſoften their hearts.

2. He declares, that ſuch a frame of ſpirit, namely hardneſſe of heart, was greatly contrary to his ſpirit, or elſe he had not been greived for it as he was.

3. They had a ſufficiency of means to have made them ſoft.

4. They were not neceſſitated to be ſo from him.

2ly, Negatively *God* doth not harden by infuſing any quallity of hardneſs into man, to make a ſoft heart a hard heart; ſo ſaith ſome of thoſe contrary to us, *God* hardens none but thoſe he finds hard.

Therefore 3ly, *God* hardens none by his primary and antecedent will, but by his ſubſequent will: *God* did purpoſe the hardning *Pharaoh* conditionally, if he was found hardening his own heart firſt, againſt all his applycations and commands, to let his people go: *God* never hardens properly, by changing the nature of a ſoft heart into a hard, this is agreed on all hands.

4. *God* did not harden *Pharaoh* by any proper means tending that way, the means that *God* uſed to *Pharaoh* had no tendency that way in themſelves but as they were abuſed by him; no, they had rather a tendency to ſoften his heart, as for inſtance,

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all those loving messages sent from God to him; and,

2ly, They being disobeyed, the dreadful following judgments sent thereupon.

3. The sparing *Pharaoh* in person, though destruction to his subjects and servants.

4. Gods ready harkning to *Pharaohs* request presented by *Moses* and *Aaron*, as to the removing and taking off those judgments from time to time; these had all in the nature of them a choice tendency to soften *Pharaohs* heart, and not to harden it.

I might adde further, the means used might have humbled *Pharaoh* and made him to acknowledge the Lord *Jehovah*; as Gods silencing his Magicians on whom he too much leaned; making them to confesse that in that plague of the *lice*, that it was the finger of God: as also his miraculous distinguishing the land of *Goshen*, where his people were from *Egypt*: these particular dealings of God had conviction and softning in the bowels of them; and we in charity are bound to believe were intended for that end: but it is objected, did not God tell *Moses* before he went to *Pharaoh*, that he would harden *Pharaohs* heart, that he should not let *Israel* go? to which I answer.

In the first place I premise, that there is much abuse of many places of Scripture, in laying too much stress upon this word (*shall*); whereas it may, as the learned Gramarians tells us, be as well read (*will*;) and the truth of this appears from the usage of the word *will* as well as *shall* in the history of *Pharaoh*, *Exo.* 3. 19. *I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go*, no, not by a mighty hand, and this hardning is elsewhere in Scripture applyed

ed to *Pharaoh* as the agent, 1 Sam. 6. 6. *do not you harden your hearts, as* Pharaoh *and the Egyptians hardened their hearts and would not let* Israel *go*: this was a received Opinion even by the Philistins in that day, so long after: that this hardening lay at *Pharaohs* door, not at Gods.

2. In answer to this objection God is said to do many things which are done by him only providentially and subsequentially; as for instance, Psa. 105. 25. God is said to turn the hearts of the *Egyptians, to hate his people, and deal subtilly with his servants*, and how did God do this? not positively but providentially, *as he blessed them with increases under their bondage, so that they grew stronger then they*, *vers.* 24. and from hence arose their hatred: and it might as well have occasioned them to love them, and fall in with them: how often is this a ground of love? is any thing more usual then (as we say) to worship the rising sun, at least to give fained love and obedience to a strong and prevailing enemie: yet this wrought in them hatred to them because they were so strong; in this sence God is said to send *Joseph* into *Egypt Gen.* 45. 7. 8. and in this sence God is said to bid *Shimei* curse *David*, 2 *Sam.* 16. 10. the assembly saith, it was by a secret command of providence; and in this sence our Lord is said to come to give division, not peace on earth; yet directly he brought peace on earth, *Luke* 2. 14. thus Christ came to make seeing men blind, *John* 9. 39. yet to open blinde eyes: the Scriptures doth often speak of the accidental and subsequent effects of ministration; this *Solomon* takes notice of, *Pro.* 1. 32. *the prosperity of fools shall destroy them*: whereas prosperity may as well lead to repentance and love to God, according to what our Apostle speaks,

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Rom. 2. the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance: but we see the same means may bring forth different effects, as Christ is set as well for the fall as the rising again of many in *Israel*, *Luke 2. 34.* the hardning of *Pharaoh* by God is not primary and antecedently designed by God in his application to him, but accidentally as I shall shew you more clearly afterwards.

3. In answer to the objection I say, that God in declaring to *Moses* that he would harden *Pharaoh*, supposeth a condition, that is to say, that if *Pharaoh* did not by all his messages and applications to him, at last let his people go, but harden his own heart under all his judgments, signes and wonders, that then at last God as a judgment would harden *Pharaohs* heart, so as he should pursue them to his own destruction: so that though it is said by God *I will harden* Pharaohs *heart*, yet God did not do it primarily, nor necessarily; neither did the means that God made use of necessarily tend to hardning but rather to soften.

But then it may be replyed, seeing those means used by God to *Pharaoh* had a more proper tendency to soften then harden, why then did not God as well say to *Moses*, *I will soften* Pharaohs *heart*, as well as say, *I will harden it*: to which I answer, that notwithstanding the proper tendency of those means, yet God who sees the end and effects of all means, and cannot be mistaken, did foresee that these means would have upon him a contrary tendency, by reason of *Pharaohs* base proud heart: *therefore I will harden*: a wise man may foresee, that the bright shining warm sun will make the dunghill stink: though the same sun will make the flower smell sweet.

2. God

2. God might thus say, *I will harden*, as he had an eye to the end of *Pharaohs* ſtate, for it was ſo at laſt from God.

But 3ly, it is replyed, could not God have taken ſuch a courſe with *Pharaoh* as to ſoften him effectually, and make him let *Iſrael* go, and ſo prevented his own ruine? I ſaid ſomething to the anſwer of this before. To which I refer the reader: if we conſider Gods power regulated by the attributes of his wiſdome, and righteouſneſs, and juſtice, he did what he could to reduce *Pharaoh* as he is ſaid in effect to do for his vineyard, *Eſa.* 5.4. God is not bound to proceed by his abſolute irreſiſtable power in converting, nor reſtraining ſinners: this corrupt notion and expectation from God hath been the ground upon which many have miſcaried: (but thus it is), God hath made man a rational creature, capable to chooſe the good and refuſe the evil; God laid before *Pharaoh* life and death; life if he would let *Iſrael* quietly go, death if he ſtill held them: there *Pharaoh* had his choice of theſe two, as all men have, where the goſpel comes: this is Gods way, *Deut.* 30. 15. *vers.* 19. and God takes it for granted, that they have power to chooſe; therefore (ſaith he) *chooſe ye*: this was his proceedings with *Pharaoh*: ſo that in order I ſhall draw up the reſult of this head.

1. That God hardned *Pharaohs* heart, that is, accidentally ſtired up and awakened the baſeneſs of his heart, by ſending that meſſage to him; *to let* Iſrael *depart his land*, which was ſo much againſt his proud and covetous intereſt, if God had been pleaſed that *Iſrael* ſhould ſtill have abode ſlaves to him, we had not heard nor ſeen the relation of *Pharaohs* rebellion, as now we do: thus God was

concern'd in hardning *Pharaohs* heart, as he croſt his will by declaring his own.

2. God accidentally hardened *Pharaohs* heart by declaring himſelf above him in power, that muſt needs provoke proud *Pharaoh* to hear of a *Jehovah* above him.

3. God hardened *Pharaohs* heart accidentally by deferring the full manifeſtation of avenging power, ſo long as he did; this made *Pharaoh* grow ſtrong, and thought he ſhould yet be able to deal with him: as *Solomon* ſaith, *Eccleſ.* 8. 11. *becauſe judgment is not ſpeedily executed upon evil doers, their hearts are fully ſet in them to do evil.* Thus a parent ſometimes can ſay, I have ſpoyled you by my indulgence ſhown to you.

4. God hardened *Pharaoh* accidentally by his condeſcending to remove his judgments ſo ſoon, and at his requeſt, and that this act of God hardened his heart you have declared in the hiſtory, when God had taken off this or that plague: it is as the effect ſaid, *Pharaoh hardened his heart.*

Thus much for the third thing to be enquired into, upon which I have been more long then ordinary.

I now proceed to the fourth circumſtance, which is more particularly.

4. The time of Gods hardning *Pharaoh* poſitively, for we muſt needs grant a two-fold hardning of *Pharaohs* heart.

1. The firſt of which is charged upon himſelf, *Pharaoh hardened his heart or made his heart ſtrong*, or as ſome tranſlations reades, *Pharaohs heart hardened it ſelf*: now this firſt hardning is from God accidentally,

accidentally, as hath been ſhown. As he is ſaid to do many things providentially.

But 2ly, we have a more ſpecial and more poſitive hardning which is appropriated to God, he is ſaid to harden *Pharaohs* heart, not as before accidentally but intentionally and judicially; and that there is ſuch a hardening imputed to God we may ſee in other caſes and perſons, that God doth ſhut up in and under blindeneſſe and hardneſſe of heart to their own deſtruction, as the fruit of ſin and rebellion againſt God: Thus God is ſaid to harden *Sihon* king of *Heſhbons* heart, made his heart obſtinate to his own deſtruction: ſo alſo it is ſaid of thoſe cities that made war againſt *Iſrael*, *Joſhu.* 11,20. God hardened their hearts to their own deſtruction and ruine, and many more who were immediatly hardned by God.

Now the Queſtion is, when God did thus in ſpecial harden *Pharaohs* heart, whether by purpoſe from eternity in the beginning of the treaty of God with him, or after he had obſtinately ſtouted it out againſt God a long time. I anſwer, that the Scripture doth no where give us one word of Gods eternal purpoſe or previous decree, by vertue whereof *Pharaoh* was neceſſitated to this obdurateneſſe againſt God: our enemies will not ſay that, I mean thoſe of them who have writ about this controverſy; neither did God by any of his dealings with *Pharaoh* properly provoke him to be hardened, but rather had they (as I have ſhewn you) a tendency to ſoften him: but the proper time of this judicial hardning *Pharaoh* by God more immediatly, was after he had tried him under ſix ſeveral plagues and their removals under all theſe ſix judgments: the relation runs thus: *Pharaoh* made

his heart strong, or *Pharaohs* heart hardened it self: but after the sixth plague the stile is changed, and *chap.*9.12. God is said to harden *Pharaohs* heart: it is true, that God did betimes, even before *Moses* went to *Pharaoh*, predict this judgement, which afterwards was executed; he did tell *Moses*, *chap.* 4.21. that he would harden *Pharaohs* heart, that is conditionally, if he first hardened his own, and *would not let his people go*: but this foretelling of it or threatening of it, doth not prove, that it was immediatly done; it is usual for God to foretel things before they come to passe; God as well at first foretells *Exo.*3. of *Israels borrowing jewels of the Egyptians*, which was the last thing in order to be done, and at first he bids *Moses* tell *Pharaoh*, *he would slay his first-born*, *chap.* 4.21.22.23. but with this proviso, *if he did not let his first-born Israel go*: even so he bids *Moses* to let *Pharaoh* know in like manner, if he did not let them go, he would harden his heart to his own destruction, I will punish his natural and his acquired hardnesse with judicial hardnesse: the sum of which is to punish sin with sin; as God threatens *Ephraim*, *Hose.* 8.11. because he made many altars to sin, *altars should be to him for sin*, that is, God would give up *Ephraim* to that sin he delighted; and that is usual for God to foretel his judgments before he execute them: see concerning the old world, *Gen.* 6. *an end of all flesh is before me*, *I will destroy men*: yet after God had determined to destroy men, he waits a 120 years: so as to the destruction of *Jerusalem* he gives 40. years to try them: so after he had resolved conditionally to harden *Pharaoh*, he stays a considerable while till he had hardened himself and rebelled against him with a high hand un-

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der ſix plagues; and that the threatning given out *chap.*4.21. refers to this time and latter hardening appeareth, if we will conſider *chap.*8.29. where we have that ſpecial warning, *ver.* 29. ſuch as we finde not before, *let not Pharaoh deal deceitfully any more*, implying, that *Pharaoh* had dealt deceitfully before, had promiſed and not performed; and it is emphatically added, *Pharaoh hardened his heart this time alſo*: Now after theſe ſix plagues, and *Pharaohs* ſix hardenings on his ſide, we have this emphatical threatning *chap.*9. 14. *I will at this time*, or turn, *pour out all my plagues upon thy heart*, which ſome underſtand of his hardening by God: ſo that this ſecond hardening by God is the fruit and effect of his voluntary and obſtinate hardening himſelf before: Now in ſpeaking to this ſecond ſort of hardening, it will be needful to enquire into the difference between the ſecond and firſt, ſeeing God is concerned in both, either accidentally or intentially; it hath already been made plain, that *God* did gradually harden *Pharaohs* heart by his former applycations unto him, but what did God do more now then before to *Pharaoh*: from whence it is now ſaid, *God hardened his heart*, whereas before it is ſaid, *Pharaah hardened his own heart*? I anſwer as to the negative part, it hath been ſpoken unto under the former head, that God doth not do any thing poſitively, much leſs forcibly to make the heart hard; neither doth he infuſe any hardening quallity whereby he hardens ſoft hearts; but that which we are to underſtand as to matter of fact on Gods ſide is this, that God doth harden by withdrawing thoſe influences of his ſpirit that ſhould ſoften; as withdrawing the ſun, makes the earth dark: the Naturalliſts tells us,

that hardening is occaſioned in a natural way by withdrawing the moiſture out of any body or ſubſtance, whereby it is condenſt and made hard, and ſtiff and unyeilding to the touch, as the earth alſo becomes hard like iron, by the withholding its moiſture by ſhowrs.

Thus withdrawing of the influences of Gods ſpirit makes the ſoul dark and hard: it ſeems to be ſuppoſed and granted in Scripture, that the ſpirit of God attends men ordinarily in ſtriving with them, as they are conſidered in a general capacity, by which means they are not ſo bad as otherwiſe they would be, *Gen.*6. *my ſpirit ſhall not alwayes ſtrive with men*: it had ſtrived and would yet ſtrive, but not always ſtrive: ſo that the wicked old world had this means, *the ſpirit*; and whereas we reade, *the ſpirit ſhall not always ſtrive with men*; the greek turns it, *my ſpirit ſhall not always continue with theſe men*: it was one of the bleſſings that God beſtowed upon rebellious *Iſrael* a long while in the wilderneſſe, *that his ſpirit was with them*, *Nehem.*9.20. he gave them his good ſpirit to guide them, till they grieved and rebelled againſt it: this was the bleſſing which God intruſted *Saul* with, whilſt he was obedient, 1 *Sam.*16.14. but upon his diſobedience God took his ſpirit from him, and an evil ſpirit came on him in the room of it: wicked men are attended with good motions of the ſpirit, but for great ſins God ſometimes withdraws it from them; and this withdrawing is called giving up perſons: ſee that eminent place, *Pſal.*81.11.12. *they would not hearken ſo he gave them up*, or as *Ainſworth* reades, *he let them go away in the perverſeneſſe of their own hearts; or to walk in their own counſels*: this was *Pharaohs* caſe,

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he had grieved, quenched, rebelled againſt the motions of Gods ſpirit, which had ſeveral times inſtigated him to be willing to let *Iſrael* go: Now he is given up to follow his own will and counſel without controul: *I will purſue, I will overtake, I will divide the ſpoil*: Thus God is ſaid to do with thoſe wicked perſons of which we reade, *Ro.* 1.24. *God gave them up*, he would poſſeſs them no longer: now the fruits and effects of his giving up or withdrawing the ſpirit, is very dreadful.

As firſt, the fruits of it is a heavineſſe and fatneſſe of heart, a very great indiſpoſedneſſe of heart to hear what God or his ſervants ſhall ſpeak to them for their own good: this was the caſe with *Elies* ſons for their horrible ſin in cauſing Gods ordinances and ſacrifices to ſtink, 1 *Sam.* 2. 25. *they hearkened not to their fathers inſtructions, becauſe the Lord would ſlay them*: God as a judgment had ſhut their hearts from hearing: ſuch an effect we reade of to *Rehoboham*, 1 *Kings* 12. 15. he had no diſpoſition to take the councel of the old men which would have been his ſafety, but the young mens to his own ruine: ſuch an inſtance we have *Deut.* 2. 30. therefore *Pharaohs hardening his heart*, and *not hearkening*, are put together all along.

The ſecond effect of this judicial act of God, is an implacable hatred to Gods moſt faithful ſervants, who ſeeks their ſouls good: when *Saul* had loſt the ſpirit of God, and the evil ſpirit was upon him, he fought to kill *David*, whom he was forced to ſay, *was more righteous then he*, 1 *Sam.* 16.17. cha. 8.11. *Saul caſt a javelin at him*, with a deſigne to kill him, whilſt he was pleaſing him with his muſick: It is conſiderable that after this hardning of *Pharaoh*, *Ex.* 10.28. he forbids *Moſes* to come any more into

his presence upon pain of death; *see thou see my face no more, for in the day thou seest my face thou shalt dy*: this was the state of the hardned Jews, *Mat.* 21. stoned one, killed another, yea Christ himself at last.

3. Such a person hath no sence of sin when committed: a judicial hardned sinner is insensible, whereas a true-hearted person is sensible of the least sin, and hath checks in his conscience upon that account: the Apostle speaks of some 1 *Tim.* 4. 2. *who have their consciences seared with a hot iron*, and to the *Ephes.* chap. 4. 18. the Apostle speaks of some, *that are past feeling*: a hardned soul is under the withdrawings of Gods spirit, is insensible of sin, therefore the author to the Hebrews, exhorts them *to have a care*, and use the means to *preserve them from being hardned by the deceitfulness of sin*, *Heb.* 3. *Rom.* 1. is full to this purpose.

4. Persons thus withdrawn from, are delivered up to themselves, do much abuse Gods mercies; all the mercy of God to such a person doth further harden him in order to his own destruction: thus it was with *Pharaoh*, and such we reade of *Rom.* 2. who are impenitent, who take advantage thereby to *treasure up wrath against the day of wrath*: all the mercies of God to *Israel* after his withdrawing himself from them, still hardned them more and more, even those 40. years that God waited upon them.

5. Such withdrawings or deliverings up is followed with a stupid blindness in their understandings, that they cannot foresee their own danger that waits for them: thus it was with *Pharaoh*, *Exo.* 14. 4. *I will harden* Pharaoh *that he shall pursue*: he sees, nor feareth no danger, but on the contrary

trary promiseth himself to overtake and divide the spoyl: so it was with those cities, *Ioshua* 11.20. *it was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they should come against* Israel *in battel, that he might destroy them utterly*; yet this they could not see, their own ruine was hidden from their eyes: so it was with the Jews, whilst under this state, *Rom.* 11.7,8,9,10. they were blinded, according to *Davids* imprecation: the same word is used for hardning and blinding: these and many more are the sad effects of Gods withdrawing his spirit, and the influences thereof, and it may well be said in this case as God speaks to *Israel*, *Hose.* 9. 12. *yea, wo be to that person from whom I depart*, the truth of it is, the heart of man is so bad and ill inclined, that God needs do no more then give him up to his own heart: and he will soon act all wickedness with greedines *Act.* 7. 42, when God gives *Israel* up, they presently worship the host of heaven; this considered we may well allow of it as a choice mercy, namely restraining grace; for by this means men are not so bad to themselves or others as they would be: if God do but say to *Ephraim*, *let him alone*, he will be bad enough, *Hose.* 4. if God let a soul alone, it will undo it self to all eternity. *David* seems to intimate by his prayer and expostulation with God, *Psal.* 51. that the foundation of his gross falling, was not only the inclination of his nature in which he was concerned, but the withdrawing Gods spirit and the influences thereof in him, which makes him so strongly request, that God would not again *take his holy spirit from him*, but uphold him or sustain him with his spirit: he is sensible, that there lay his defect before: Now it is remarkable; and the consideration of it

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is much for our instruction, that this withdrawing the spirit of God, and the influences thereof, was never the portion of any, but as the fruit and effect of great disobedience to the motions of Gods spirit within, and the word without: any body will readily grant this a truth, as to *Pharaohs* case; God takes great pains with him before he delivered him up to this hardening, and it is as clear concerning the Jews, *Christ would have gathered them as a hen gatheneth her chickens under her wing, but they would not*, *Mat.* 23. and that this delivering up is no other then the fruit and effects of provoking sin and disobedience, see these places following, *Psal.* 81. 11. *but my people would not harken to my voice*, Israel *would have none of me: so I gave them up to the hardness of their hearts*, or *their hearts lusts*: *Act.* 7. 42. after the children of *Israel* had made a calf, and thereby greatly provoked God to anger, and this after God had newly delivered them with a high hand out of *Egypt*, and brought them thorow the Red-sea, *then God turned and gave them up*: see *Rom.* 1. 24. *therefore God gave them up*: see *verse* 26. *for this cause God gave them up. So Ephraim is given to Idols*, therefore God lets him alone: when persons sin against light, it is the ready way to forfeit their light: this was the case with the Jews, their mallice was so great against Christ, that they contrary to their own reason and experience, accuse him of *casting out devils by Belzebub the prince of Devils*; notwithstanding their children must cast them out by the name of Jesus: after this, Christ speaks to them in parables, to the end they might not see or understand, to fulfill the prophesy of *Esaiah*, *chap.* 6. recited, *Mat.* 13. the ground of Gods shuting their eyes,

eyes, and blinding and hardning their hearts, was but the effects of their first shutting their own eyes and ears, as you may reade, *Act.* 28. 27. *Solomon* saith, *Pro.* 29. 1. *he that being often reproved hardens his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed*, and that without remedy: all that hath been added, confirms the truth of the fourth head, that Gods hardening *Pharaohs* heart, was Gods judicial act upon *Pharaohs* hardning his own heart, under the first six plagues, and so we have done with the fourth particular.

We now proceed to the fifth and last circumstance to be spoken unto, by way of explication, which is this, whether this second hardning is unavoidable in its approach, or irrecoverable when under it? I shall speak a few words to both these particulars.

And to the first, I answer that God even in this his approach to harden in judgment, is very willing to be hindered by the creatures meeting him by humiliation and compliance: this appears even in this second hardning of *Pharaoh*; though God is said to harden his heart, yet still his further proceedings are conditional, as appears, *Exo.* 10. 4. *if thou refuse to humble thy self, and let* Israel *go, then I will proceed*: now if *Pharaoh* had been shut up in & under an impossibillity of relenting and humbling, then this had not been propounded as a *Medium*: for it had been rather to have insulted over *Pharaoh* in this his deplorable condition, to have stirred him up to do that which he was in no possibility to perform, which men are not usually found to do: if I shall see a person in an invincible strong place, from whence he cannot get out, and then make him promises upon condition of his coming out;

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what is this but to insult over his bondage? which God doth not do: if God invites *Pharaoh* to let *Israel* go upon promise of impunity, he well knows it was in his power yet to let them go, though not so easily as he could at first invitation, because every act of rebellion makes the heart yet harder and harder: therefore God promiseth *Pharaoh*, if he would yet now at last let *Israel* go, he would not bring the locusts, or any other plague; we reade that the worst and most rebellious of mankinde are still sent unto by God; who could be worse then the old world, for whom God was grieved at the heart, and *repented that he made man?* yet he *strives* with them by his spirit in the ministry of *Noah* 120. years: so also 2 *Cron.* 36. 15. he had compassion after all that hardness contracted by them, as appears by their abusing his prophets, see *Ezek.* 12. we there reade of a *rebellious house*; who had hardened themselves to a high degree, having eyes and see not, ears and hear not, yet still God useth means with them; and that with this proviso, *ver.* 13. it may be they will consider though they be a rebellious house, God knew that they were not in an incapacity to consider and return; such a hardened people are not debarred of means of consideration, the wicked old world were in a capacity of returning to the last moment of the 120. years so long as the patience of God waited: God waited after he is said to harden *Pharaohs* heart under four judgements more to provoke him to prevent his utter destruction: and besides all this, it appears, *Pharaoh* was not put into an incapacity to repent, because after all this hardning he did repent, though it did not hold with him *chap.* 9. 27. (saith he) God is righteous, I and my people are wicked;

ed; and however ſome may judge of this repentance, had it been continued in and not repented of, it would have ſaved *Pharaoh* from deſtruction: ſo again *cha.*10.16. *I have ſinned againſt the Lord and againſt you*; So that God did not harden *Pharaoh* irrecoverably, ſo as that it was impoſſible for him to repent: neither was *Iſrael* ſo ſhut up after the death of Chriſt, but that they might ſtill repent; for we reade of three thouſand of them who were guilty of that great ſin of killing Chriſt, converted in one day, *Acts.* 2. by *Peters* ſermon: and that they are not irrecoverably ſhut up by vertue of that ſentence, and that hardening and blinding judicially by God is granted of all ſides: for they ſhall yet in time have ſoft relenting hearts given them, and their blinding and hardening is but temporal: the firſt prophecy of it *Eſa.*6. had in it an (*until*) and *Rom.*11. they ſhall be grafted in again; if they abide not ſtill, in unbelief; and this muſt needs follow, unleſſe we grant, that *Pharaoh* or the Jews had committed that unpardonable ſin, which I ſuppoſe none will ſay: if this be ſo, then let us take up this conſideration by the way, that if *Pharaohs* hardening was not irreſiſtible nor irrecoverable, how can *Pharaohs* hardening be a meet type of abſolute perſonal irrecoverable reprobation? except you will plead for a perſonal conditional reprobation, ſeeing all theſe threatnings againſt *Pharaoh* are conditional, if he do not repent to let *Iſrael* go.

2. He was in a capacity to repent even under the worſt hardening till his utter deſtruction; ſo that *Pharaohs* caſe will not do that ſervice, that it is by moſt ſummoned to do, in the point of perſonal and abſolute irrecoverable reprobation: but

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it may be objected, doth not this arguing seem to lessen the judgement of Gods hardning Pharaohs heart as if it were not so great as indeed it is? for if it be not irresistible nor irrecoverable, how is there that dread in it? I answer that notwithstanding what of this kinde can be said, yet it is a great, yea, the greatest of all judgements that can be inflicted upon a person, to be hardened by God, and that for these five reasons.

First, because this hardening by God is the fruit and effect of the highest provoking sin, it is sin punished by sin, to be given over to commit sin with despight, which before he commited with regret and trouble but now with all greedynesse; see *Rom.* 1. 28. it is to be *given up to a reprobate minde.*

2. This hardnesse of heart from God though there may be a possibility to withstand it or recover out of it, yet know, it is unspeakable hard, next to an impossibility, as it must needs follow: for every act of impiety doth still harden more and more: it was very hard for Pharaoh to attain to that degree of relenting which he did attain unto, but yet more hard to keep it upon his heart: custome in sin begets a second nature: see 13. *Jer.* 23. *can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? no more can they learn to do good who are accustomed to do evil.*

3. No person so near, so lyable, and ready to fall into his own destruction as a hardened sinner; he is very near to ruine: *who* (saith *Job, cha.* 9. 4.) *hath hardened himself against God, and prospered?* muchless can they think to prosper whom God hardens.

4. To be hardened by God is the greatest of judgements;

judgements; becauſe commonly it is the puniſhment of the abuſe of mercy, and no judgement ſo ſevere as that which follows the abuſe of mercy.

5. This hardening by *God* is a great judgement as it is a token of *Gods* higheſt diſpleaſure, ſee the woes that go along with it upon the Jews, *Mat.* 23. that which yet remains in order to a cloſe of the 17. and 18. verſes, is, to ſum up thoſe Doctrines that flow from the words thus explicated, which may be many; but I ſhall but little more then name the moſt of them.

1. From verſe. 17. *for the Scripture ſaith unto Pharaoh*, from this preface this Doctrine offers it ſelf to our conſideration.

1. Doctrine, *That the ſayings of God are not leſs divine or authoritative, becauſe they are written.*

The writing of Gods ſayings doth not take away from them divine authority, but they are as if God had ſpoken them at preſent by his own mouth; The Apoſtle might as well have ſaid, God ſaith unto *Pharaoh*, yet he chooſeth to ſay, *the Scripture ſaith.*

This Doctrine is very well worth our conſideration in this day in which we are fallen; but I ſhall but briefly touch it, becauſe I ſpoke ſomething to it in the explication: it is plain theſe words were ſpoken by *God*, *Exo.* 9. yet the Apoſtle referreth us to the Scripture; and this is uſual with the Apoſtle in other places: ſee *Gal.* 4. *the Scriptures ſaith, caſt out the bond woman*, though *God* ſpake it: ſo 1. Timo. 5. 18. *the Scripture ſaith, thou ſhalt not muzzel the mouth of the oxe*, whereas *God* ſpake it; So that to ſay *the Scripture ſaith*, and to ſay, *God ſaith*,

saith, are the same; and indeed, why should any body question the truth of this doctrine? are the sayings of Kings and Monarchs of lesse authority because they are written and made into a law? holy men appropriates that to the Scriptures that is proper to *God* himself, as convincing, converting, clensing, quickening: *they are able to make the man of God wise unto salvation*, 2 Timo. 3. 15. *able to build up, and give an inheritance amongst them that are sanctified*, Act. 20.

From hence we may note.

1. That those that slight and undervalue the Scriptures are not guided by the same spirit that the Apostle *Paul* was: there are some that will cry up Gods speakings, yet undervalue the Scriptures; nay, preferring revelations and imaginary speakings of *God* before the Scriptures: Holy St. *Peter*, who we are sure was guided by *Gods* spirit was of another minde; who exalts the Scriptures above the real speaking of *God* to him in the mount, *and calls the Scriptures a more sure word of the prophets.*

2. Prize the holy Scriptures as sayings of *God* himself, obey them and tremble at them: as if *God* were speaking himself with an audible voyce, so much for the first Doctrine.

2. Doctrine drawn from the manner of *Gods* applycation to *Pharaoh*, *the Scriptures saith unto Pharaoh*: the greek word saith, it is to *speak* or *treat with.*

Doctrine, *That Gods way even with very wicked men is to intreat them, not force them to obedience:*

Though it is in *Gods* power to force, compel and crush them, yet he chooseth to treat with them; and invite them by his sayings to obedience this is a truth from the beginning, even with *Adam* in the

the garden, when he had ſinned and forfeited his life, without a word to be ſpoken to him, yet God reaſons or words it with him; and this is Gods way all along to *Saul*, to *David*, to *Solomon*, to the *Jews*: God is ſpeaking before ſtriking, but I ſhall ſay no more to this.

3. Doctrine, which is more general from the text; *That God almighty doth greatly concern himſelf in his peoples afflictions and oppreſſions.*

No father or mother doth more cordially and ſenſibly concern themſelves for their natural children, who are moſt dear and tender to them, then God doth for his: God for their ſakes will interpoſe with the greateſt men and Monarchs on earth, and make them to know, that he is above them, when they abuſe his firſt-born: this is the very ground of Gods ſending *Moſes* to *Pharaoh*; he had a perfect and deep ſence of their afflictions, *I have ſeen, I have ſeen,* (ſaith God) *their afflictions*: it is recorded *Judges* 10. 16. *that his ſoul was grieved for the afflictions of his people*: this is the cauſe propounded why he ſends to the nations, *Zecha.* 2. 8. becauſe they had been afflicting his people who were as dear to him as the apple of his eye; and ſo we have it, *Eſa.* 63. 9. where he ſpeaks of this very affliction; if we obſerve the context, *in all their afflictions he was afflicted with them*: God hath a ſimpathy with them in their afflictions: it is as if he had afflicted himſelf: it is true, God many times ſeems as if he did not regard the afflictions of his people: he bears long with their enemies, as in this oppreſſion in *Egypt*; he ſuffered them *to be evil intreated* 400. years, *Act.* 7. 6. as afterwards he ſuffers them to be afflicted 70. years in *Babylon*, yet this is not becauſe he did not perfectly ſee and

take notice; but becauſe God hath a work to perform both upon his people and upon their enemies: and when he hath performed his work upon both, when his people are fit for deliverance, and his enemies ſins are full, *Gen.* 15. then God ſteps in preciſely, the very ſame day, *Iſrael* muſt not ſtay a day longer then needs muſt in *Egipt*; God hath great judgments to bring forth upon the nations, upon this very account, for afflicting and oppreſſing his firſt-born: in ſpecial upon *Miſtery Babilon*, for his peoples ſakes, to *avenge the blood of his ſervants*, this doctrine affords two words to two ſorts of people.

1. To perſecutors and oppreſſors of Gods people; know it is a dangerous thing to be found ſo doing, wronging Gods firſt-born ſon, ſuch who are ſo near and dear to God: *wo* (ſaith our Lord) *to the world becauſe of offences to his little ones*, and it is not the height or greatneſs of men or powers that can excuſe them; God ſpeaks to the great and high King *Pharaoh* in this caſe, and wherein he dealt proudly, he made him to know that he was above him.

2. To thoſe whoſe portion it may be to be oppreſſed or perſecuted.

I ſhall only name three words of direction to you.

1. I know for certainty, that God takes ſpecial notice of all your wrongs and injurys, even the leaſt of them.

2. He ſees ſuch a ſtate to be beſt for you for a time.

3. That ſtate ſhall not laſt a day longer then the ſet time, ſee *Exo.* 12.41.

4. Doctrine,

4. Doctrine, *I have raised thee up, or delivered thee*, according to the former interpretation.

That every act of impunity and reprieve from judgement misimproved, doth directly contribute to the fitting and preparing such a person for wrath.

Gods very purpose in reprieving of *Pharaoh* six times, was, that if after all, *he did not humble himself, and let* Israel *go*, he would make him examplarily the subject of the power of his wrath, so as that all the world should ring of it; and he would place the foot of his proceeding in wrath upon his kinde and deliberate treatys with him. *Ainsworth* reading this text *Exo.* 9. 15. doth reflect much light upon this doctrine; so also doth the Chaldee paraphrase, which I shall not again repeat, inasmuch as you have it before in the explication: this was Gods argument with his people *Judg.* 10. 11. *seven times I delivered thee*: this is Gods argument with *David*, 2 *Sam.* 12. 8. this is the argument with *Hezekiah*, *Esa.* 38. he had not rendered to God according to the benefit, and this with *Pharaoh*: oh what a dangerous state it is for persons or nations to be rebellious under reiterated mercies and deliverances: no wrath is raised so high as that which is raised on this foundation: and so I will leave each person to apply this Doctrine, it may be of instruction to each of us.

5. Doctrine, *That I might make my power known*, in the which is the power of his wrath; I note.

That as God is incomparable in his long-suffering, patience and goodness, so he is as transcendant and unconceiveable in the power of his wrath.

As his thoughts of mercy is above our thoughts and imaginations, *Esay.* 55. so also is the power of his wrath as much *above our* reach: *Psal.* 90. 11. *who knows the power of thy anger?* see how the prophet *Nahum* takes notice of both these in God, *Nahum* 1. 3, *slow to anger, great in power, will by no means clear the guilty*: of this power and long-suffering we have the Apostle speaking afterwards. *verse* 22. there are two natures in God, *Esa.* 42. *he is a lamb, he is a Lion*, from hence learn to make peace with him before his wrath be kindled, *Psal.* 2. last.

And that my name might be declared.

8. Doct. *That God almighty designes in his dealings with men, the exalting his own name, to make his name known, to get himself a great name.*

He aimed at this in the destruction of *Pharaoh*, *Exo.* 14. 17. 18. *Neh.* 9. 9. 10. I will but name this.

7. Doctrine. *That mercies exercised and judgments executed doth both tend to exalt Gods name.*

God had a double work in hand *whereby his name should be declared in all the earth*, in the saving *Israel*, and the destroying of *Pharaoh*: God gets himself a great name by saving his people in such

such a miraculous way; and he gets himself a name also by destroying *Pharaoh*, see *Esa.* 63. *verses* 12, 14. which is eminent to this purpose, *Psa.* 83. *latter end.*

But some may say, how is Gods Name declared in his proceedings with *Pharaoh?*

I answer, First, by his proceedings with *Pharaoh* to declare himself *the God of his people, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob:* this is that Name that God would have exalted and magnified: See *Exo.* 3. 15. *this is my Name for ever, and my memorial to all generations:* God is willing to be reckoned and named *the god of his faithful servants*, Heb. 11. *he is not ashamed to be called their God; he is not ashamed*, that is, he is very forward so to be called; this is the name that *Moses* in his Song doth endeavour to exalt, *Exo* 15. 2. *he is my God, my fathers God: he is my God* (saith *Moses*) *I will prepare him a habitation, my fathers god I will exalt him*; as if he should say, God hath in this act shewn himself in special the God of his people; and this is no small priviledge in *Davids* sence, *Psa.* 48. *this god is our god*, Psa. 67. 6. *God even our God shall bless us*; It was a singular strain of faith in them, as it was in *Thomas*, John 20. 29. when he said, *my Lord, my God*: propriety in God is a choice priviledge; it is the priviledge of overcoming Saints, *Rev.* 21. 7. *I will be their God*; as he is their father in order to sympathy, so their God in order to power of salvation and deliverance: Oh then the happy state of such a people who are under such favour and love and care of such a God, as the Psalmist saith, *Happy are they who are in such a case, whose God is Jehovah*, Psal. 146. 5. *Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help*: this Name of God is that

Name which he designes should be known in all the earth, declaring therein, that he is well able to save his people out of the hands and power of their most potent enemies.

Vers. 18. affords us these Doctrines following.

1. Doct. *That God was unquestionably righteous in his whole passage and dealings with Pharaoh of old.*

The Apostle brings this passage to vindicate Gods righteousness as to his proceedings with the Jews; to shew, that God is not unrighteous in shutting up rebellious sinners in the obduratnesse of their own hearts; for he was just in what he did to *Pharaoh*: these words (as I have shewn you in the explication) are an inference by way of application; the Jews themselves would easily grant, that Gods proceedings with *Pharaoh* were not only righteous but very gratious in the whole treaty with him.

There were six circumstances in Gods dealings with *Pharaoh* that renders his last proceedings with him righteous.

1. *Pharaoh* before God sent to him, was a cruel oppressor of Gods people, who were near and dear to him, *his first-born*.

2. God offered implicitly to forgive all that had been past, if now at last he would discharge his people out of their slavery at his request.

3. God waits upon him a considerable time, sends several messages, and made many gracious applycations unto him, by his special and signal servants, *Moses* and *Aaron*; he sends six several messages unto him before he inflicted that spiritual judgement of hardening him.

4. God

4. God never denyed or refuſed his requeſt put up to him by *Moſes* for the removal of thoſe judgement that were upon him.

5. After ſo many returns to his former rebellions, upon the removal of the ſtroke, yet after all, God offers him, that if yet he would humble himſelf, and let *Iſrael* go, he would ſend no more plagues, *chap.* 10. 4.

6. In Gods inward judicial hardning him, by *withdrawing his ſpirit*, he did not leave him in an utter incapacity to repent, as hath been before proved in the explication: there is not ſuch a paſſage in all the Scriptures, wherein the long-ſuffering and patience of God is ſo ſet forth, as in this of *Pharaoh*: the Apoſtle might well ſay, he *endured with much long ſuffering the veſſels of wrath, whilſt he was filling up his meaſure.*

Yet that which is yet further worth our conſideration follows in the ſecond Doctrine.

The 2*d* Doctrine, from the 18. verſe,

That God in his dealings with Pharaoh *laid a platform of his proceedings with reprobates to the worlds end.*

And the Apoſtle doth intend no leſſe in laying this inſtance before the Jews, to inſtruct them concerning Gods proceedings with them, to be as juſt as they were with *Pharaoh* to ſeverely puniſh, after abuſes of great long-ſufferings and patience.

He hath mercy on whom he will: from whence ariseth this Doctrine in the third place.

Doctrine, 3. *That justification is not the fruit of our merrit, but Gods mercy*: here he calls justification by the name of mercy.

4. Doctrine, *That the law and terms upon which men are justified and saved, are founded in Gods own will without the contrivance and proposition of the creature: he hath mercy on whom, or what manner of persons he will.*

He hath made the passage to life and salvation through grace by faith, and no other way but by faith alone: those whom he will have mercy on are Jews and gentiles, who believe and obey, *Rom.* 3. 30. *seeing it is one God that shall justifie the circumcision by faith and the uncircumcision through faith*: So much for the first part of the *verse*.

And whom he will he hardeneth, from whence I note this Doctrine.

5. Doctrine, *In a Scripture-sence God is concerned in hardening sinners.* This I have spoken unto also sufficiently in the explication.

Whenas the Apostle makes use of this term *harden* in direct opposition to mercy or justification, it supposeth a hardened person in a sad and deplorable condition: *he hardens*, it might as well have been said, he *rejects* or *reprobates*: from whence I note this.

6. Doctrine,

6. Doctrine, *That as hardneſſe of heart in man is the greateſt ſin, ſo from God the greateſt judgment:*

It is ſuch a ſin that the ſin of *Pharaoh* is ſtiled *hardneſſe of heart:* his refuſing counſel, diſobeying and rebelling againſt God; his abuſe of *Moſes*, is all ſummed up in hardneſſe of heart: ſo the ſins of *Iſrael* in the Wilderneſſe is called *hardneſſe of heart*, *Heb.* 3. 8. *harden not your hearts, as in the provocation in the Wilderneſſe*; which takes in all their murmurings and rebellion: the ſins of the Jews in Chriſts time is called by this name of *hardneſſe of heart*, *Mark* 3. 5. *Mark* 6. 52. But for the ſakes of ſome it will be needful to lay down ſome diſcoveries of a heart that is not poſſeſt with this comprehenſive ſin of hardneſſe of heart; becauſe ſome are apt to condemn themſelves in this reſpect who are not concerned.

I ſhall lay down ſix characters of a heart that is not hard in this ſinful ſtate, whatever they may think: but I ſhall but name them.

1. That heart that ſtands in awe of God, that fears God, is not a hard heart.

2. That perſon that is of a cordial, conſtant, private, praying ſpirit is not hard.

3. That perſon that trembles at Gods word, ſo as to put in practiſe what it commands as ſoon as he underſtands it, is not hard: ſuch a heart had *Joſiah*, 2 *Kin.* 22. 9.

4. That perſon that hath humble, low thoughts of himſelf, is not one of a hard heart.

5. That perſon that is ſenſible of the leaſt ſin and troubled for it, and is touched at it, is not hard; and when ſecret as well as open ſins afflicts and pricks his heart.

6. That

6. That person that trembles at Gods judgements, as did *Josiah*, that person is not of this number.

Doctrine, 7. *That disobedience to Gods declared will and command, persisted in, is very highly provoking to God; in order to giving up persons to hardnesse of heart*; This was the case with *Pharaoh*, this was the case with the *Jews*.

Doctrine 8. and last, is this, *That the law, terms and conditions of hardening, rejecting and reprobating, are not founded in, or according to the will of men, but of God.*

The reason of this text and Doctrine, by S. *Paul*, is raised upon occasion of the quarrelsome arrogant Jew, who would impose upon God, who should be the subjects of Gods hardening, namely, such who did not submit to the law of circumcision; they would have God to harden the gentiles or reject them, but he declares his will to harden both Jew and gentile, who should disobey and rebel against Christ and the gospel: and this *will* of God is made into a law, as I have shown you, not a secret will as many would have it; but this his will is *Joh.*6.40. *revealed*, as with respect to those whom *he will have mercy on*: so also as to those whom *he will harden*, and make subjects of his wrath, *John* 3.36. *he that believeth on the son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the son hath not life, or shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him*: These are those whom his will is to harden: Thus I have done with the 17. and 18. verses.

I now proceed to *verse*. 19.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Gods will and word are terms equivolent and his purposes to mankinde in order to mercy and Judgement is not Irrestible.

Verse. 19. *Thou wilt say then unto me, why doth he yet finde fault? for who hath resisted his will?*

WE have contained in this verse, the Jews quarrelsome replycation by way of Object. against what had been asserted by the Apostle in these four following verses: we have the Apostles severe and pathetical reply in two parts.

1. A sharp reproof.

2ly, A substantial vindication of the righteousnesse and wise proceedings of God with mankinde; both which the Objection seems to impeach. But I shall first speak unto the 19. *verse* before us, in which we have the Objection framed, either as the Apostle framed it himself, or as they themselves made it: some think the Apostle framed it himself as personating the Jews in it: the rise of this Objection may be supposed to be from what the Apostle had been lately asserting concerning the power and prerogative of God, in justifying and hardning men at his own will: some think that from the Instance of *Pharoah*, and the conclusion drawn thereupon, *that God hardens whom he will*; from thence the Jews apprehended themselves some of those subjects of his will to harden: thereupon their spirits were inraged against the Apostle his doctrine and God himself; and that what we have in this 19 *ver.* is the fruit & effect thereof;

of; they are ready to impeach S. *Pauls* Doctrine as if he had not represented God consistent with himself, whilst he had shut them up in hardnesse and blindenes, irresistably, and yet having so done, complained or found fault with them, and blamed them, who are under such a kinde of necessity by a decree of his own will.

The words themselves are presented as a perverse object or reply against God; in which we have these four parts considerable.

1. The objector or person objecting, expressed in the singular particle *thou*.

2. The person unto whom this objection is directed; *unto me* saith S. *Paul*.

3. The Subject objected against, *why doth he finde fault?*

4. The absurdity it self imputed to God, *for who hath resisted his will?* this objection some think is drawn from the passage of *Pharaoh*, *Exo.* 9. 17. that God seems to complain of *Pharaoh* after he was hardened by God, and there is a colourable ground also as to the Jews, that after they were hardned and blinded by God, he yet blames them: and the foundation of this Objection is from a rational principle, that those persons are not to be complained of, who are determined by an absolute decree or will of God, as they supposed *Pharaoh* and themselves were, according to the Apostles Doctrine? It is the principle of wise-men that persons are excusable who are necessitated by a greater power then their own to be what they are: The Apostle in these words doth not personate an humble conscientious person modestly desirous of satisfaction, with a spirit of meeknesse in things wherein they are dark: But as an impatient man

in

in hearing the truth, when the light thereof shineth into his conscience, to discover his nakednesse: and further we may perceive by the form of the Objection, that it doth discover a confident insulting spirit in the objector, as also much haughtynesse in the face of it; he finds fault with God for finding fault: but to come more closely and distinctly to the words themselves, by way of explication; as I have proceeded in the former verses, so I shall enquire distinctly into these words, and that under these six considerations.

1. I shall enquire into the reading of the words.

2. I shall enquire what sort of persons may be supposed to make this quarrelsome Objection or reply?

3. From what part of S. *Pauls* Doctrine this Objection is raised?

4. What are we to understand by Gods finding fault?

5. What may be supposed that God findes fault with?

6. What is this will which the objecter supposeth to be irrisistable in God?

Of each of these a few words in order.

And 1. As to the reading of the words, most interpreters reads them as they are here read, yet I meet with a second reading which runs thus, why doth he finde fault who hath disobeyed his law? and there may be a good colour for such a reading from the consideration of that affirmity that is between Gods *will* and Gods *law* or *word*, they are taken one from another; see *John.* 7. 17. *he that doth my will shall know of my doctrine*: by which will is to be understood his word, and those who thus reade the words, do thus paraphrase upon them:

them: why is he so angry with us: and resolved so severely to deal with us, who are so far from refusing obedience to his law; that it is only our zeal for the law that makes us reject your Christian religion? And to make this reading more plain they proceed also upon the 20 verse: thus from S. *Pauls* reproof you may be ashamed of your saucy and prophane arguing: for may not God your creator impose what law he please upon you? is he bound never to abrogate that law given by *Moses?* and cannot he give you another law, and require obedience to that? and for your non-obedience to that law, deal with you, as the potter with his clay, that marreth in his hand and maketh you vessels of dishonour? and this parraphrase seems to have some colour of truth in it. But I rather incline to the common reading before us, forasmuch as the words so read, well agree with the Original and the Context.

The second thing that I am to enquire into, is the persons propounding this quarrelsome objection: it is here propounded in the singular *thou*: some are of opinion that the Apostle did not really and in matter of fact meet with such an Objection; but perceiving the spirit of the Jews his Antagonists did shape it out accordingly, by way of anticipation; and so applycable to any at any time who should make such an objection; but it rather seems by the answer, that there was such an Objection really made, unless we should suppose the Apostle is making a man of straw, and then fighting against it: for his answer seems to be directed to a real Antagonist; and that the person he replyed unto, were the blinded obstinate rebellious Jews is plain enough; they being the people

he now was concerned with in this Epiſtle and chapter, unto whom in particular he did direct his ſpeech, under the ſame appellation, as in the reply to the Objection: ſee *chap.* 2. *O man!* which *O man* is underſtood the Jews; ſee *chap.* 2. *ver.* 17. *thou art called a Jew:* So when the Apoſtle ſpeaks under the ſame appellation, *O man!* he means the Jews ſee *ver.* 20. and we may eaſily perceive, that they were the people intended, by conſidering their temper and ſpirit: we reade of no people in all the book of *God*, ſo perverſe ſpirited as they, even againſt *God* himſelf, in all ages: what cauſe *God* had to complain of them all along: their fathers are ſaid *to ſpeak againſt God*, *Pſal.* 78. 19. It is no new thing for them to quarrel and capitulate with *God*: ſee how *God* complains of the ſame people, *Mala.* 2. 17. *ye have wearied me by your words, yet you ſay wherein have we wearied thee?* ſo *Mal.* 3. 13. *your words have been ſtout againſt me, ſaith the Lord; yet ye ſay, what have we ſo much ſpoken againſt thee?* thus they diſpute with *God*; and the ſame ſpirit appeared in this generation, in Chriſts time; ſee how he repreſents them in the parable murmuring againſt God, *Mat.* 20. 11. not allowing him to do what he will with his own: and ſuch a ſpirit our Apoſtle met with from them, *Act.* 13. 45. when he had preached the goſpel to them (in love to their ſouls) they were filled with envy, yea they contradicted and blaſphemed at the doctrine of the goſpel: ſo that what we have in our text is no new thing with them, they were much deſtitute of the fear of God, and a humble ſpirit. Some would here have it thus, that S. *Paul* had been in this diſcourſe managing the Calviniſts opinion of abſolute election and reprobation

probation, and that the Jews like *Lutherans* (or free-willers) doth reply and cavil thereat; to whom the Apostle takes pains to convince, *vers.* 20, 21,22,23. and indeed at the first view it seems to sound that way; but upon examination of the Apostles reply throughout in the four following verses, it will clearly appear otherways.

The third particular to be enquired into is, from what part of the precedent doctrine of the Apostle is this objection raised? it is the general received opinion on both sides, from all that I have reade, that I can remember, that this objection is drawn from the close of the former verse, (*whom he will he hardeneth*): and that which occasions persons so to judge, is from these two relative particles in this verse; as the particle *then* or *therefore*; *thou wilt say then*, as also the particle *yet why doth he* yet *find fault*? notwithstanding what hath been said before, and that the objection is raised, from that verse appeareth from hence, that he keeps the same stile, *who hath resisted his will*? so that it is probable, that the objector had his eye upon the close of that verse, and indeed the very voyce of this verse doth discover it to be begotten of the former; and the objection argues thus: we are hardened by his will and pleasure, and yet he finds fault and upbraids us for not believing in your Jesus, notwithstanding we are shut up by an absolute decree; for his will and counsell must stand: and if we should now believe, it were to no purpose, being concluded in his will: thus the Objection seems to argue from the Apostles words going before.

4. What may we understand by Gods finding fault? the word in the greek is to complain or reprove,

prove, not to punish or reprobate, as some imagin it is supposed; that *God* doth complain of and reprove those hardned by him: *Pharaoh* being hardened by *God* is yet complained of by *God*, for *God* to finde fault according to the context, seems to contain a threatning destruction upon those he so complains of; sometimes for *God* to complain of or finde fault, is to mourn over a people, as he did over *Israel*, *Why will you die, O house O Israel?* and this kinde of complaint is used by *God* in both Old and New Testament: Christ *weeps over Ierusalem* in his complaint for them: so that for *God* to find fault or complain, is to mourn and bewail for a person or peoples destruction, and the cause of it.

5. What is it that *God* findes fault with and complains of in them? I answer, the great evil that *God* complains of in his people is their unbelief & disobedience, *because they believed not on his onely begotten son Jesus Christ*; all the threatenings and complaints against the Jews was for their disobedience to and rejecting of Jesus Christ.

But that circumstance most needfull to be enquired into, is about this will of *God* which the objection seems to render irresistable; *who hath resisted his will?* the whole ground of this objection seems to be laid here, that it is not reasonable to finde fault, or blame the Jews who are necessitated by Gods will to be what they are; the great question is, what will of *God* is intended here which none are able to resist? for the words must be understood, *who hath been able to resist his will?*

I answer first, it cannot be understood of Gods preceptory will, the will of his commandments;

for that will of God hath been reſiſted by ſome, even from the beginning of the world to this day: *Adam* in paradice reſiſted that will, and ſo do all men more or leſſe, as the Apoſtle *Iames* ſaith, *in many things we offend all:* and it might have been as properly if not more properly ſaid, *who hath not reſiſted his will*? and many have reſiſted his ſpirit alſo: Act. 7.

2. Suppoſe we underſtand it of Gods decreeing will, then it runs thus, who ever did or can hinder the coming to paſs of that which God hath purpoſed the coming to paſs? what he hath purpoſed ſhall come to paſs, and take place againſt all interveniences whatſoever; and if it be taken ſo, what then will appear in this objection to croſs what the Apoſtle had ſaid in the premiſes, *who hath reſiſted his will*? that is, his abſolute will, without conditions expreſt or implyed: there are two decrees of God (as I have ſaid before) that none can reſiſt, nether men nor Angels.

1. That believers in Chriſt, ſo continuing to the end, ſhall be ſaved.

2. Such as diſobey the Goſpel, and ſo live and dye, ſhall be damned; this will of God is irreſiſtable; but that thoſe who are now unbelievers and hard-hearted perſons may by the help and grace of God be recovered, is very poſſible; for we do not read of any ſuch hardening of God, as doth leave men for ever in and under an impoſſibillity of returning: this was neither the ſtate of *Pharaoh* nor the Jews (as you have heard;) ſo that theſe circumſtances conſidered, the preſent obiection in our text ſeems to be but an irrationall quarrelſome reply, contrary to their own reaſon and experience, like unto that quarrell with our Saviour,

Matt.

Matt. 12. 24. when they charge him with *casting out divils by Beelzebub the prince of divils*; when as their children must cast them out by the name of Jesus: and that this obiection doth savour of such a spirit, captious and quarrelsome, designing only to undervalue Gods proceedings, and to disparage the Apostles doctrine, will very clearly apear in our further traversing the Apostles answer thereunto, the answer doth clearly demonstrate, that these words proceeded from a base and unworthy spirit, tending to the disparaging Gods power and Supremacy over Jews and gentiles, which the Apostle had been before asserting, both as to his showing mercy and as to his hardening: but I shall be very brief as to this verse, because I shall have more properly occasion to demonstrat the nature of this objection, in the answers following, in verses 20, 21, 22, 23.

That only which I shall do in order to the conclusion of this 19. verse, is only to present you with those doctrinall conclusions that ariseth from the words thus opened: which are as followeth,

First, From the nature of the Apostles proceedings.

1. Doctrine, *That it is one part of the work of a gospel-Minister to anticipate and answer those Objections which they foresee may arise either through ignorance or obstinacy against their Doctrine.*

This our Apoſtle is careful in, and therefore he repeats the Objection, and prepares to take it off; It is certain, that the beſt and cleareſt of doctrines may admit of cavils and objections, and therefore their mouths muſt be ſtopped by the power of reaſon and current of Scriptures: whether S. *Paul* met with this Objection in ſo many words, or whether he meets with it in his own apprehenſion he proceeds upon it; we are not bound to ſtay till an Objection comes out, but we may anticipate it: this was much the practice of Jeſus Chriſt and his forerunner *John*, *Matt.*3. *think not to ſay you have Abraham to your father*, Matth.5. *think not that I am come to deſtroy the law*; ſo *chap.*9. when he ſaw their blaſphemous thoughts concerning his pronouncing forgiveneſſe of ſin, he anſwers them in their thoughts, ſo *Luk.* 12. he ſaw that they had ſome ſecret thoughts that his coming ſhould procure peace, but he teacheth them the contrary, ſo *Luk.*4.23. he prepares for their objection againſt him, becauſe he did not do thoſe works in his own Countrey that he did elſewhere; and we have the ſame ſpirit appearing in this Epiſtle alſo, *chap.*11.19. *thou wilt ſay then, they were broken off, that I might be graffed in*: the Apoſtle anticipates what they would ſay before they ſaid it: So 1 *Cor.*15.34. *Some men will ſay, how are the dead raiſed?* This may ſerve for Inſtruction to goſpel-Miniſters, conſider well what may be objected againſt your doctrine, and prepare an anſwer, leave not any pit of Objection open leſt any ſhould fall into it: this is greatly the care of our Apoſtle in this Chapter.

2. Doctrine,

2. Doctrine, *That God may juſtly finde fault with thoſe whom he judicially hardens.*

It was the ignorance or perverſeneſſe of theſe Objectors, ſo to think or ſuppoſe, that God might not finde fault with thoſe whom he hardeneth; for it is certain, God doth and may finde fault, and blame thoſe whom he hardeneth; he did ſo to the Jews and alſo to *Pharaoh*, as you may ſee *Ex.* 9.17. *Matt.*23.

And that God may juſtly and righteouſly complain of thoſe who are hardened by him, I ſhall offer four Reaſons.

1. Becauſe God doth not poſitively or forcibly nor yet primarily or antecedently harden any (as you have heard) but accidentally by the paſſages of his providence.

2. He hardens none but ſuch as firſt harden themſelves voluntarily under his mercies, yea ſuch mercies and means as are as proper, yea much more proper, to ſoften then to harden; hardneſſe inflicted by God as a puniſhment of former ſin.

3. God may juſtly finde fault and complain of thoſe hardned by him, becauſe he hardens none but ſore againſt his will, when no mercies nor Judgements will work upon them: he firſt uſeth all means to prevent it, as you may ſee 2 *Chron.* 36.15. it is when there is no remedy: ſo *Mat.* 23.37. *how often would I have gathered thee as a hen gathereth her chickens, and ye would not.*

4. He may well complain and finde fault with thoſe hardened by him, becauſe they ſo continue, notwithſtanding they are not neceſſitated, neither are they ſhut up in an incapacity of returning to

softnesse, as hath been plainly proved as to *Pharaoh* and the Jews; therefore it is not absurd for God to finde fault with those hardned by him.

3. Doctrine, *That Gods will and purpose as to mankinde, in order to mercy and judgement, is not irresistible.* This I have also spoken to in the Explication.

The Fourth and last Doctrine is this,

That Circumcised Jews, a people near to God, and a people that had received kindenesse from God, above all others, are most abusive, perverse, and rebellious against God: These are the only people who contend and quarrel with God, God had occasion in all ages to complain of *Israel*; see that pathetical complaint, *Esa.* 1. *I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me:* these are the people that God complains of, *Jer.* 2. that said, *they were Lords, and they would come no more to God:* these are they that charge Gods ways with unequallity, which God complains of, *Ezek.* 18. 29. is it not such a spirit that our Apostle in their children here fights against; a perverse, angry, quarrelsome spirit against God did always attend them: none have been so boldly abusive to God as his own people; these are they that are finding fault and replying against God, whilst they are demanding why he finds fault with them.

From hence we may draw a double Use of admiration.

1. At the baseness of mens hearts, that should so evil requite God, who had made them his people above all the world besides; God hath often back

had occaſion from his people to appeal to the nations upon this account; as to their reſpect and ſtedfaſtneſs to their gods above his people to himſelf.

2. We have from hence cauſe to admire at the unconceiveable patience and long-ſuffering of God to mankinde, yea to his people: oh the patience of God to thoſe rebellious Jews whom he had brought out of *Egypt*: how did he bear with them in all their murmurings and rebellion in the wilderneſs, for 40. years: he ſuffered their manners, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks; but as to the curſed nature of this Objection, you will preceive more hereafter, from the Apoſtles anſwer in the four following verſes. So much for the 19. *vers.*

CHAP. XII.

Plainly detecting that unreaſonable conſequence of Gods forming men on purpoſe to damn them.

Ver. 20. *Nay, but O man! who art thou that repliyeſt againſt God? ſhall the thing formed, ſay to him that formed it, why haſt thou made me thus?*

AS to the reading of theſe words, I finde very little variation, therefore I ſhall handle them as they lye before us. Theſe verſes to the end of the 23. requires our diligent enquiry into and carefull heeding, becauſe they ſeem to have much darkneſs and knottineſs in them, on the one hand.

And 2ly, on the other hand being rightly understood, they will cast and contribute much light to the precedent verses; but it is plain that these verses are by many persons much wrested and abused; as they are compelled to serve in that hard service of strengthening that hard-favoured opinion of personal and eternal predestination, scarce any one passage of Scripture more frequently abused then this 20. *v.* it is a weapon near at hand upon all occasions to take up to silence, those who do but question their irrational, absurd and horrid extravagant notions about Gods eternal personal election or reprobation, they presently snatch up this Apostolical reply, who art thou that replyest against God? as if he that asserts the doctrine aforesaid were as infallible as the Apostle was, when he spake these words; nay although the matter against which this reply is taken up, be of another nature then this before us.

Before I come to the words, it may not be amiss to give you a hint of what is commonly built upon these words by the persons forenamed, which are these and such like notions, that God of his meer pleasure antecedent to all sin original or actual, did decree to glorify his soveraignity and justice in the eternal rejection and damnation of the far greater number of mankinde, nay, all but a remnant; and that this may have a face of justice and equity with it, he hath shut them up under an unavoidable necessity of sinning and rebelling against himself, and refusing his grace: that God hath as absolute power to create, thus vessels of honour and dishonour, and consequently of wrath, as the potter hath to make vessels for inferiour and supe-

riour

riour uſe at his pleaſure, without contradiction, of the ſame lump of clay.

And that theſe are the notions declared of many, my own ears are witneſs, though indeed there are ſome who although they hold the ſame, yet are aſhamed to make application of their own principles; and if any perſon ſhall ſoberly urge the contradictiouſneſs of ſuch notions to *Gods* declarations, and his oath to the contrary, then preſently this is returned, *who art thou that replieſt againſt God?* and it follows, *ſhall the thing formed, ſay to him that formed it, why haſt thou made me thus?* and know this, that theſe abominable God-abuſing notions and opinions, with ſuch confidence, are built upon a double miſtake of the Apoſtles Doctrine in theſe verſes, and ſo they are erroneous in their foundation: as that,

1. This forming and making in this context doth refer to mans creation at firſt in *Adam*, and that the lump which is here intended, is the maſs of earth that *Adam* was made of, and that *God* from that original, made or determined ſome for veſſels of honour or elect, and the far greater number for reprobates or veſſels of diſhonour and wrath, not conſidering what the Scripture ſpeaks to the quite contrary, as to that making, that *God* made man *upright*, even all good and veſſels of honour.

2. This miſtake is founded either upon an ignorant or wilful miſ-underſtanding, that this abaſing of men according to our text, is the fruit of diſobedience and rebellion, and abuſe of Gods mercies, long-ſuffering, and patience, as this parable in our text doth ſet forth, as it alludes to *Jer.* 18. 6. it *is when the clay is marred in the hand of the potter*, in

not

not submitting and yielding to the mould to be a vessel of honour, then and not till then his minde changes, and he makes him another vessel: for although it must needs be granted, that it is in the potters power in one sence to make most of his vessels for inferiour and dishonourable use, yet it is not for his interest so to do, in case the clay will run, so as to make a finer sort; a workman doth not usually commit such waste upon his materials, much less doth the most wise *God*, who made man to glorifie his grace: but I shall have occasion to speak to this in the next verse; only in a few words, I shall show you, that there was no such doctrine on foot in this context and controversy with the Jews, as personal and absolute eternal election and reprobation, as I have shown and proved all along by many arguments: it is a grand mistake to think that any thing of that kinde had been proper in this case: for if the Jews had understood, that personal and absolute election and reprobation had been S. *Pauls* doctrine, it had been against their judgment and interest to have opposed him in it or cavilled against it; for they could not but know, that if there were any persons above others under personal election, it must be the circumcised Jews who were chosen in *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*: and *God* had before told them, that he had elected or chosen them above all the nations of the world besides, to be *a peculiar people unto himself*: they are called *Gods charge* or *lot*; therefore we must conclude, that the Apostle was not here treating of that point, namely, of meer personal election or reprobation, but a specifical election of persons so qualified, namely, believers and obeyers of the gospel, whether Jews or gentiles:

and

and this is the doctrine that offends the Jews, that God had destroyed that personal election (as they thought *Paul* preacht) and made both Jews and gentiles level, that they had no priviledge or advantage more then the gentiles, as to justification, without faith in Jesus Christ: of all people under heaven none were more for personal election then the Jews: see what pains God takes to perswade *Peter* to be otherwise minded *to go to the gentiles*, *Act.* 10. 10.

2. That personal election or reprobation was not the doctrine that was on foot in these verses, because such a doctrine would have been heterogeneous, and of another kinde to all the rest of the context in general: for it is not hard for the weakest who are willing to understand, to see that the great controversy lay about the terms of justification, whether by the law or faith, which controversy needs not have been, if personal election had been the designe.

3. It is plain, that the controversy doth not in these verses depend about that point, nor the first making, but that making which is Gods handling persons made: it is not said, that God ordained *Pharaoh* in creation to be hard, but it was done in time upon his own hardning first, and after he had endured him in his long suffering a great while, as you shall hear upon *ver.* 22. 23. making doth not always refer to proper making in creation, in the Scriptures, but handling as we may perceive, *Mat.* 23. 15. and several other places: this forming or making *Pharaoh* was Gods just hardning him, and so as to the Jews, their objection did not lie, as to their first making or creation; they have nothing to alledge against that, but about their

their preſent making or forming by God to deſtruction, for their rebellion againſt Chriſt and the goſpel: the Jews above all other people were honourable veſſels in their firſt making of this kinde in Gods handling them: but for their ſins they were propheſyed of *to be diſhonourable*, Hoſ. 8. 8. *now ſhall ye be amongſt the gentiles as a veſſel in whom is no pleaſure*: but I proceed to the words themſelves diſtinctly, wherein we have the Apoſtles zealous and pathetical anſwer to the Jews captious and quarrelſome objection, *ver.* 19. this anſwer of the Apoſtle conſiſts of two parts.

1. We have a ſharp and ſevere reproof in the former part of the words.

2. We have a ſubſtantial confutation even to conviction, to the end of the 23. *verſ.* by the Apoſtles anſwer to this objection we may clearly ſee the nature of it, that it did tend to the diſparagement and impeachment of the wiſdome and power of God, in his handling and hardning whom he will: the objecter will not allow the almighty that liberty which he will allow a mean tradeſman, a potter, to deſigne and form his veſſel either more honourably or more contemptibly at his pleaſure, and according as his ſtuff will run, either finer or courſer: the Objecter will not allow God to make of a ſtubborn rebellious perſon or people, a veſſel or veſſels of diſhonour, and to make thoſe who obey the goſpel, and ſo yeild and ſubmit in his hands, veſſels of honour, namely, ſuch as are called both Jews and gentiles, before prepared unto glory.

I ſhall firſt ſpeak unto the reproof contained in theſe words, wherein we have theſe four circumſtances conſiderable.

1. We

1. We have the Apoſtle deſigning to abaſe the objecter by the manner of his ſpeaking, (*but O man who art thou?*) which is compellation of diminution; what a man, a poor mortal man, ſold under ſin, lyable to death at Gods pleaſure, what thou to ſtir up thy ſelf againſt thy creator! this kinde of ſpeaking tends to lay men low, as when *David* thus ſpeaks, *Pſal.*8. *what is man that thou art mindful of him?* the tendency of his words are to abaſe men.

2. In this reproof we have the Apoſtle laying before them the tranſendant power, wiſdom, might, majeſty of him againſt whom they contended, couched in this appellation (*God*), *who art thou that repl yeſt againſt God?*

3. The Apoſtle lays before them the nature and quallity of their ſin by name; he calls it, replying, taking up a diſpute or anſwering again, the which is forbidden to ſervants, as to poor mortal men, *Tit.* 2. 9. *not anſwering again or gainſaying.*

4. We have the Apoſtle amplifying and enlarging upon the indignity and unworthyneſſe of the objecter, by a ſimilitude of the work and workman; *ſhall the thing formed ſay to him that formed it why haſt thou made me thus?* this compariſon ſets out the deportment of the objector towards God, with a kinde of unnatural prodigious deformity and unworthyneſſe; for what can be more repugnant to nature, then for that thing or perſon which receives his being from another, to quarrel with him about the nature of that his being the ſheep, that he is not an oxe, the oxe that he is not a man, men that they are not angels; or according to the Metaphor, as if the chamberpot ſhould ſay to the potter, why was not I a drinking-pot? ſo that we may

may perceive by the manner of the Apostles speaking and arguing, that his designe was to abase and lay low the objector, even those Jews who had been charging God with either defect in wisdom or in power, this vocative kinde of speaking is the effect of passion of minde, *O man!* sometimes wonder, sometimes of sorrow mixt with love; see *2 Sam.* 18. 33. *O my son Absalom, O Absalom my son, my son!* signifying very high passion of minde: so *Mat.* 23. 37. *O Jerusalem!* sorrow mixed with love and pitty, the Apostle is under much passion of minde, for these his contrey-men according to the flesh; as he also seems to be in the beginning of this chapter; he had a great zeal for this people, and it grieves him to see them so obstinate against their own mercy in this passion of minde, he seems to speak to the same people, *chap.* 2. 1. *O man!* ver. 3. *O man!* the Apostle in our Text is not only thus affected for their sin but the dishonour of God; and now his designe is to vindicate the honour of God; but some may say, what was there more particularly in this objection that so much provoked the Apostle to make this pathetical reply in order to abasing the objector? I answer there appears four circumstances in it, that doth so greatly stir up the Apostles zeal.

1. The Apostle had a clear sight from what spirit this objection did arise, which was not from ignorance or weakness, but from an arrogant, captious, quarrelsome spirit, a bold, imperious, insulting spirit against God.

2. The Apostle in this objection perceives much slighting and undervaluing put upon God himself; from the very manner of speaking: we have not so much as one of these honourable names or titles of

of God inſerted, neither *God* nor *Lord*, but *he* and *his*; which we always account a ſlight put upon any ſuperiours by inferiours: as *ſhe* or *he* ſpeaking of parents or maſters.

3. We have in this objection or reply ſelf-juſtification: *why doth he yet finde fault?* they ſee no cauſe of Gods finding fault with all their behaviour under his judicial hardning, they are blamed, but they know not for what; they ſee no cauſe.

4. We have at leaſt implicitly a charging all their diſobedience, and rebellion, and hardneſſe of heart upon *God*, as the fruit of his irreſiſtable determination and decree, as we may ſee in the reading the words, *who hath reſiſted his will?* whereas it hath been proved, that the worſt of ſinners; ſuch hardened by *God*, are not neceſſitated by *God* ſo to remain: but there are two things to be enquired into by way of explication, the anſwer to which may be of great uſe to clear the Text and context.

1. What is, or where is it ſinful to diſcourſe, reaſon or word it with *God*?

2ly, What making or form are the Jews put into by *God*, at which they are ſo much offended, and at which they thus quarrel with *God*? of both theſe I ſhall particularly ſpeak a few words.

1. We are not to underſtand by all that the Apoſtle hath ſo importunately ſpoken, as if it were unlawful or unmeet for men with reverence to *God* & ſobriety, to ſearch out the righteouſneſſe, wiſdom, and goodneſſe of the ways and counſels of *God*: we ſhall finde that this hath been allowed and accepted from men. Queſtions of this kinde have received anſwer, as is plain in *Abrahams* caſe, *Gen.* 18, how freely did *Abraham* reaſon and diſcourſe with

with God about the deſtruction of *Sodom*, and God was not angry with him, but condeſcends to his propoſitions: ſuch familliarity did *Job* take upon him, *Job* 21. and ſo did *Jeremiah*, *chap.* 12. *let me talk with thee of thy judgments*: God is willing his ways and works ſhould be enquired into, provided it be with a humble ſpirit and with due reſpect to the Majeſty and power of God; that is, not replying againſt God, which many times is ſo accounted from this place, to ſtand up for the vindication of Gods equitable and impartial proceeding with mankinde, when by the doctrines and principles of ſome they muſt neceſſarily be impeached; for to ſhew the abſurdity of ſuch opinions is not taxable by our Apoſtle in this text; thoſe who are of that opinion to urge this text, to oppoſe ſuch vindication of Gods righteouſneſs, ſuppoſeth the Jews to be of that which they call the Arminian principle, which is a great miſtake in them: for there were no people under heaven more cordially principled on the other hand for a meer perſonal election then they; they took all but themſelves to be reprobates, and forbid, *that the goſpel ſhould be preached to them that they might be ſaved*: 1 *Theſ.* 2. 16. this S. *Paul* complains of, that by the Jews he was forbidden to diſcharge his office in this kinde, therefore they were far enough from the opinion of univerſal and impartial grace: but this I ſhall ſpeak unto more afterwards as I proceed; but to ſpeak poſitively to this queſtion, I anſwer, to reply or take up a diſpute againſt God according to this text, is conſidered two ways.

1. In matter.
2. In form.

As to the manner or form, when our words are ſtout

ſtout and bold, without rendring God his due Titles; ſee what a humble frame of ſpirit *Abraham* appeared in, in his reaſoning with God; and ſo likwiſe *Ieremiah*, *Iob*, and others alſo, the contrary whereunto God complains of, *Mal.* 3.13. God complains that their words were ſtout, ſo in this text, their words were of a gainſaying nature, the Jews ſpake to God as if he were their equall. this was the manner of *Pharaohs* ſpeaking, *Exo.* 5. *who is the Lord? I know him not:* and this was the ſpirit of the Jews in the wilderneſs, they murmured and quarrelled againſt God, thus much as to the manner.

2. As to the matter condemnable, when what is ſpoken or thought doth tend in it ſelf to the diſparaging the Wiſdom of God: this is an exceeding high peece of preſumption againſt the moſt high and moſt wiſe God; this God will not bear with in his moſt dear ſervant *Iob*: in all his exquiſite miſery he muſt not be allowed to ſpeak the leaſt word that might reflect upon the wiſdom of God; ſee how ſeverely God ſpeaks to him, *Chap.* 40. 2. *Shall he that contendeth with the almighty inſtruct him? he that reproveth God let him anſwer it*; and *Iob* falls flat under it, elſe he had been broken: ſee the ſharp rebuke of God to ſuch a people as this, *Eſa.* 45. 9. *Wo to him that ſtriveth with his maker, ſhall the clay ſay to the faſhioner, what makeſt thou? or thy work, he hath no hands?* It is imperfect blaming the work of God; this is the ſpirit diſcovered in the Text, God will not have his Wiſdome nor his Power queſtioned.

2. It is sin when men do not quietly sit down under the mighty hand of God, *who art thou that replyest against God?* that doth not sit down silently under Gods reproofs, but complains discontentedly, like *Jonas* to be angry, and vindicate himself in so doing: but that which is altogether needfull to be enquired into, is the matter against which the Jews finde themselves so aggreived and discontented, and wherein they do implicitly impeach the wisdom and power of God: and that is supposed here by our Apostle to be about their form or shape, which they were now made in, therefore the Apostle sets it forth by a similitude of a *workman* and *his work*; as the work disparaging the workman, saying to him in a disparaging way, *why hast thou made me thus?* or of this fashion or shape: this our Apostle judgeth a parallel instance to the case. Now the question then is, what form or shape are the Jews cast into with which they are so displeased? to this I shall speak in answer, both negatively and affirmatively: but before I speak particularly to it, I premise this by the way, that this word *make* or *form* in Scripture hath divers acceptations, a matter of twelve ways it is taken: so that it is not always to be understood to respect creation of man, but sometimes to ordain and constitute; thus God is said to make *Saul* king, that is, put him into such a capacity: thus it must be understood, *Esa.* 43.7.21. *this people have I formed for myself*, that is, with respect of their restoration: thus *Paul* speaks 1 *Cor.*4.13. so *Rev.*5.10. *he hath made us kings and priests.*

Now what making did the Jews quarrel at?

1. Negatively, the Jews could not here mean by *making* and *forming*, their original creation in *Adam*,

Adam, their forming there and then was as good as all the reſt; there was nothing on foot of this nature in all the controverſie (as I have ſhewn before;) they could not be offended at their proper term.

2. Neither could it be ſuppoſed, that they intended Gods decree or ordination of Reprobation, for they were far enough from believing that notion as to themſelves eſpecially; neither is there any thing in the Context that ſounds that way as to perſonal election: but of this I ſhall ſpeak more clearly when I come to *ver.* 21.

But affirmatively, there was a twofold *framing* or *making* upon the Jews, at which they were much offended at God, and both reſpecting Gods preſent dealings with them for their actual rebellion againſt the Goſpel, which was now judicially upon them.

1. They were by God ſubjugated in their outward ſtate to the Nations, as to their outward glory and politick government, wherein they had exceeded all the world beſides; *Gods preſence was in the midſt of them*; *his ſanctuary was amongſt them*; *they were his firſt-born ſon*, the head and not the tail; this people are now *ſcattered amongſt the Nations, and their temple and glory laid in the duſt*; they are made *as a veſſel in whom is no pleaſure*; as it was propheſied of them, *Hoſ.* 8. 8. and herein are a diſhonourable veſſel according to our Text: this our Lord tells them *Matth.* 23. *laſt. their houſe is left deſolate*: this formation they are greatly offended at, *why haſt thou made me thus?* ſay they, they are not ſenſible of any ſin of theirs that could deſerve this forming, nay, they queſtioned whether God had power or right to thus make them, con-

trary to his promise made to their fathers *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*.

2. They took themselves wronged (as we may perceive) that God had put them out of a capacity of obtaining justification or salvation, by all their zeal and legal obedience, whilst enemies & rejecters of Jesus Christ; they are threatned with eternal death *if they do not believe in Jesus Christ*; *ye shall die in your sins*, notwithstanding all your legal obedience, if you believe not that I am he: *why hast thou made me thus?* that is, put me into this capacity: Now the great designe of the Apostle is still to maintain Gods unquestionable right of power, to turn a disobedient people into what form he please, when they have first abas't themselves by rebellion; he still carries on the same conclusion, *he hardens whom he will*: but according to promise I shall be brief upon this verse, because I shall meet with it more fully and properly in the following verse: that which remains according to our usual proceedings, in order to concluding this *verse*, is only to lay down those Doctrinal conclusions that offers themselves to us from these words.

1. From the Apostles zealous replication, I note.

1. Doctrine, *That it is the nature of a true cordial faithful servant of God to have his zeal kindled, when he hears Gods name and glory dishonoured, and his attributes, his wisdom, power, mercy, and goodness abused.*

This was the spirit of meek *Moses Exo.* 32. 19. he brake the tables hereupon: this was the spirit of *Jobs* friends, when they saw but the least appearance

pearance hereof, as they thonght in *Job*. So it was with *Paul* at the ſight of Idolatry *Act.* 16. *his ſpirit was ſtirred in him*: it is as it is with a dutyful childe to his father, he cannot bear to ſee him diſhonoured; ſo *David* was ſenſible hereof, *Pſal.* 42. 10. as a ſword in his bones: *Paul* and *Barnabas waxed bold*, *Act.* 13. 46. *when the Jews blaſphemed*: ſee alſo *Pſal.* 44. ſo was *Hezekiah*, upon the blaſphemy of *Rabſhakeh*, 2 *Kings* 19. compared with *Eſa.* 37.

From the deſigne of the Apoſtle to abaſe the Jews.

2. Doctrine, *The great ſin of the circumciſed Jews was ſpiritual pride, or pride of ſpirit.*

This ſin of pride in them God complains of old, *Hoſe.* 5. 5. *cha.* 7. 10. their pride was teſtified to their face; and to this our Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Rom.* 2. they made their boaſt, *they ſaid we ſee*, *John* 9.

3. Doctrine, *It is a very high piece of preſumption and impudence in man to queſtion the reaſonableneſs of the terms and conditions propounded by God in order to mans juſtification and ſalvation.*

To ſay or think that there is a defect in Gods wiſdom in propounding ſuch or ſuch a way rather then ſuch; this was the very caſe in hand, and the great fault of the Jews; this is very unreaſonable ſo to reply: it is but reaſonable and equal, that he that is ſole author and donor of mans ſalvation, ſhould take his own way, and propound his own terms upon which perſons ſhall reap that benefit: if God be about to bleſs *Abraham* with a great

blessing, to make him the father of the faithful, he must follow God at his foot, stoop to his directions in every thing, as to the way to it; the clay must yield to the hand of the potter, if it will be a vessel of honour: to this speaks *Esaiah* 40. 13. *cha.* 45. 11. they must not command God.

4. Doctrine, *It is very unreasonable and a high provoking sin against God, for a poor finite creature, who hath received his very being from him, and who hath forfeited his very being a thousand times by sin, yet to be found disputing and quarrelling with God about the form of his being, why he is not treated better by his maker.*

As if a malefactor pardoned by the king should quarrel with him, that he did not make him one of his bed chamber or confer some great honour upon him; may not God do what he will with his own? *Mat.* 20. 7, 8.

5. Doctrine, *That the great dispute that the unbelieving Jews had with God, was not about their original making, or future rewarding, but about their present handling, called making.*

The Jews question with God about the justness of his present judicial dispensations upon them, *why hast thou made me thus?* the truth of this will more clearly appear if we consult the context about this present hardning whom he will.

But I proceed to the next verse.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

Explaining the potter and clay, and that God makes and mars veſſels according to their ſubmiſſion or rejection of him.

Ver. 21. *Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the ſame lump to make one veſſel to honour, and another to diſhonour?*

THeſe words are propounded by way of interrogation, which kinde of ſpeaking ſignifieth much intentneſs in the ſpeaker, and hath much awakening force upon the perſon unto whom ſpoken; it is a kinde of ſpeech much uſed by this Apoſtle, both in this Epiſtle and elſewhere.

2. This kinde of ſpeaking ſuppoſeth a ſtrong aſſumption and concluſion in the matter it ſelf: *Hath not*, is as much as if he had ſaid, it is certain he hath; it puts the queſtion out of doubt: we have the Apoſtle in theſe words further managing and manifeſting his diſlike of the former objection, *ver.* 19. and alſo further demonſtrating the unreaſonable perverſeneſs of the ſaid objecter, giving yet a more clear account, *that God may harden whom he will*, and yet be juſt in finding fault or complaining of them ſo hardened by him: which poſition is built upon this double principle.

1. From his unqueſtionable right of power and prerogative.

2. From this conſideration, that he hardens none but ſuch as by their ſin break or firſt mar in his hands, when he is about to work them, and ſoften them

them for vessels of honour; or such as first are become clay of the vilest sort.

I need not (I suppose) tell you, that this passage, and the words before us, in the 21. verse, is the chief of that presumed strength, which many think they have in this chapter, to stand by them in their opinion of an absolute personal election and reprobation, upon a meer personal account or consideration: but upon due consideration and examination, it will appear to be one of the most serviceable passages in this chapter to the contrary opinion, and to demonstrate, that there is nothing of such a nature in this context, as personall election or reprobation before-time, or without condition.

I finde three opinions upon these words.

1. Some are of opinion, that the words here are to be taken to relate directly and properly to God, and admits of no comparison; *hath not the potter*, that is, *hath not God power to make one vessel to honour & another to dishonor*? (that is of a right power) over that earth, of which he intended to make man, that of the same piece of it he may lawfully make some for life, and some for death and destruction.

But the words doth not afford them any such notion, if indeed it had run thus; *hath not our* or *the heavenly potter power?* but this word *potter* without any article of application to God, will not afford such an interpretation, nor authorize such a construction.

2. There are others that do grant, that these words are comparatively spoken in each word as *potter*, *power*, clay, *vessel*; of this minde is *Calvin* and *Beza*: but that the application is not made by

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the Apoſtle, but is left to be ſuppoſed by the reader; which if ſo, then the application muſt be according to each mans judgment upon it: ſome therefore proceeds thus, as granting a compariſon, *hath not an ordinary potter power over the ſame clay or lump to make according to his own pleaſure, one veſſel to honour and another to diſhonour?* even ſo and much more hath God power at his pleaſure, of the earth to make one man to life, and another to condemnation. This is the ſupplyed application which ſome (ſuppoſing the ſpirit of God hath left none) preſume to give out from the treaſuries of their own underſtandings, to ſupply the defects of the ſpirit, where nothing is wanting, nor no need of their help: yet thoſe whom I have read that are of this opinion, (I do faithfully aſſure you) are much divided amongſt themſelves about this clay and lump: ſome think it is men uncreate or before creation; others think, that it is man create before his fall; others think, it is after his fall; great diviſion is amongſt them about this matter, which doth much incline us to queſtion, whether the truth in this matter is amongſt them.

And the truth of this matter is near to each of us, if we will receive it; for according to the context and parallel place, *Jer.* 18. the clay and lump here intended, is *man*, conſidered as he hath voluntarily abas't himſelf by a courſe of obſtinate ſinning againſt God: but the aforeſaid extravagant opinions are occaſioned from a miſtaken ground, thinking that the ſpirit of God had not explained this parable of the potter.

But ſuppoſe there were no application of this inſtance by the ſpirit of God, but it be left to men, the queſtion is whether a fairer and better might

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not be made, then what commonly is made? surely yea: it is granted on all hands, *that the potter hath power over the clay, of the same lump, to make one vessel to honour and another to dishonour*: why not this application as well as that? in like manner, and much more, hath God power, (which none can be offended at,) over men who have corrupted and abased themselves by a voluntary course of sinning and disobedience (whereby he may be accounted as a lump of clay,) to ordain some of them, namely, believers, to vessels of honour, and others of the same lump who reject his grace and love, vessels of dishonour and wrath: Is not this interpretation as proper as the former?

But there is a third opinion, which grant, the words are a comparison, and also, that we have the application made to our hands; and that the spirit is not beholding to any man to lend him his help herein, but that this application is ready made, and contained in *ver.* 22. 23. and this third opinion I finde nearest to the truth; and I question not, but so will you also, as we go along: it is easily granted, that every comparison contains two parts, the fore-part of it, and the application of it; and the same you shall finde here. I scarce meet with any expositors or interpreters of what judgement soever, as well those who are for personal and absolute election, as others, who do so much as put it to the question, whether our Apostle in these words before us, had an eye, at least of allusion, if not proof and demonstration, to that place, *Jer.* 18. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. the margent of your bibles generally have it quoted; which if it be but granted, that our Apostle did at all refer unto this 18. of *Jer.* then we shall easily see and perceive, that this

21. *verse*

21. *verſe* affords no aſſiſtance to that opinion that is commonly built upon it; nay, the opinion it ſelf by that means will appear importune and unreaſonable: what ground can be gathered for the former interpretation? if *Jer.* 18. be a parrallel place with this: how then can God be underſtood the alone potter, the earth of which *Adam* was made the clay and lump, ſeeing in *Ier.* 18. we finde a potter properly ſo underſtood a tradeſman, to whoſe work *Ieremiah* is ſent, in *Ier.* 18. *Iſrael* in their degenerated ſtate is this clay and lump, as in a courſe of ſin and rebellion; his diſhonourable ſtate is his ſtate of captivity, *Ier.* 22. 28. *Hoſ.* 8. 8. but beſides the general received opinion of men of all judgements, I ſhall lay before you ſeven conſiderations, tending to prove and demonſtrate a parrallel between *Ier.* 18. and this 21. *verſe.*

1. The words in both places are ſpoken, to the ſame circumciſed *Iſrael* of God; the Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaks to the ſame people, that the prophet *Ieremiah* ſpeaks unto, this I think will not be denyed.

2. Theſe words were ſpoken to them at both times, when they were in a ſtate of actual rebellion againſt God, which you will finde as to the firſt clear, if you reade *Ier.* from the firſt to the 17. chap. and laſt verſe.

3. Notwithſtanding all their wickedneſſe againſt God in morals, as to judgement and righteouſneſs, and obedience to Gods requirements, yet they leaned upon God, and preſumed themſelves to be Gods only people, and were of opinion, that God could not righteouſly leave them: ſee what pains God takes to beat them off from this their falſe confidence, *Ier.* 7. they leaned upon their temple-worſhip, whereupon *God* threatens *to*

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punish the circumcised with the uncircumcised, chap. 9.

4. The designe of both places *ver.* 21. and *Ier.* 18. is to set forth Gods right of power over his people, as they are his, to deal with them according to their doings, notwithstanding what promises had been made to *Abraham* their father, seemingly to them appearing contrary.

5. God in and by *Ieremiah* is not looking back to their original in creation in *Adam*, but looks directly at their present actual rebellion against God; even so in our context doth the Apostle.

6. The persons in *Ier.* 18. threatened and made vessels of dishonour, are the very same who were on the wheel designed for vessels of honour, but marred in Gods hand, which clearly agreeth with 2 *Tim.* 2. 20. if a man purge himself from this, *he shall be a vessel of honour*: a great part of *Israels* dishonour and abasement lay first and last in their temporal captivity and outward destruction and desolation, *Ier.* 18. plucking up, and destroying, laying wast, *Ier.* 1. 10. as also destruction as to their place of worship, *Ier.* 7. 14. *I will do to this house which is called by my name as I did to Shilob*; the same is threatened by Christ to the latter generation, *Mat.* 23. *left your house be left unto you desolate*; thus we see, that the Apostle *Paul* might well in this present controversy with these latter Jews, allude to that passage, *Ier.* 18. as a place that might comport with his present businesse: but I shall take a little more particular notice of these words of *Ieremiah* as they lye, being well assured that a humble and sencere heart, who is willing to see truth, may have much sight from this text, *Ier.* 18.

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We reade in the beginning of this *chap.* that *God* appoints *Ieremiah* to meet him at the potters work-houſe, there *God* promiſeth him to teach him a leſſon relating to his people *Iſrael*: he muſt there ſtudy a Sermon, the potters wheel and inſtruments muſt be his books: It is uſual with *God* to teach by tipes and figures: this method we finde often uſed by *God* to his prophets: *God* had ſomething to teach *Ieremiah* by this ſigne and figure; *go to the potters houſe, there will I cauſe thee to hear my words*: *God* judgeth the earthen clay-pots to be a meet embleme of man in general: it is uſuall for God in Scriptures to reſemble men to clay, earth, potters veſſels, ſee *Eſa.* 64. 8. *we are the clay, thou art the potter*: ſo *Job* 33. 6. *I am formed out of the clay, Jer.* 19. 11. *I will break this city as one breaketh a potters veſſel*: whilſt God repreſents men as the potters clay, he teacheth them a general leſſon in four circumſtances.

1. Thereby God teacheth and ſetteth forth mans mean and low original: he is formed out of the clay in *Adam*: this is one leſſon that *Jeremiah* learns in the potters houſe, that the higheſt, holyeſt man that ever lived in the world was but an earthen veſſel, had but a houſe of clay: this *Elihu* ſpeaks, *Job* 33. 6. *I am formed out of the clay*; 2 Cor. 4. 7. *we have this treaſure in earthen veſſels*: this is ſpoken to abaſe men: to that end both *Elihu* and the Apoſtle ſpeaks: *I am formed out of the clay as well as thou*; to this end it is by ſome ſuppoſed our Apoſtle in our text brings this compariſon to humble theſe proud Jews: *ye are but in the hand of God as clay in the hand of the potter.*

2. Man is compared to clay, or a potters veſſel, to ſet forth the curious workmanſhip of God upon

upon man: he is not red lump, but wrought into clay, that may be moulded, shaped and wrought, and made a curious vessel: we know that there is very curious vessels made of clay: we have it *vers.* 3. *he wrought a work*: or, as some reade *a curious work on the wheel*: God takes much pains in making and shaping *Israel* as the potter doth with a curious vessel: this God would teach *Jeremiah*; and in such case, the potter is not willing his curious work should mar, so as that he must be forced to turn it into a dishonourable vessel.

3. *Clay* or a *potters vessell* to set forth the brittleness of mans nature, easily doth he break & miscarry in both respects and that without remedy: we use to say, who can mend it? when God threatens men with a suddain and fatal destruction, he compares his destruction to the destruction of a potters vessel, *Jer.* 19. *Psal.* 2. *as a potters vessel will he break them.*

4. That man is of *clay* or an *earthen vessel*, sets forth not only his easie destruction by God, but his easinesse to be overcome by temptations; he that is from the earth is easily overcome: this God considers as to his people, *Psa.* 103. *he knows we are but dust.*

These are those general lessons that the prophet may learn in the *potters house*, but there are more special and particulat lessons which God will make *Jeremiah* to hear and learn from in the *potters house* with respect to his people *Israel*: from the passages of this *earthly potter* there are five more special Lessons that God will by this Embleme instruct *Jeremiah* in concerning *Israel.*

1. He will here shew him the great care and pains that God had been taking with *Israel* to make

make them an *honourable vessel*, they had been upon the wheel curiously wrought; God had taken them close to himself from the common earth and clay, and prepared them as the potter doth his clay, with much labour, before it comes to the wheel: God as to his choice love and respect to them saith, he hath made them to cleave to and clasp about him as a man doth a girdle, designing them to be for a name, a praise and a glory, but they would not: it is a remarkable passage of Gods care, love and respect to this people, *Jerem.* 13.11. as is also by Christ expresst as to this people, *Matth.*23. *how often would I have gathered you and you would not*: It is a remarkable consideration, that *Ieremiah* must learn and know, that *Israel* was not rejected by God in the lump but upon the wheel, whilst he was forming them for honour; and this is as true concerning the Jews with whom the Apostle had to do at present in our Text: they also were rejected upon the wheel, not in the lump originally considered: this well weighed by the judicial reader may satisfy him, that there is nothing in this verse to the end it is brought for, as to eternal personal election or reprobation: the instance doth not afford the least whisper that way, and it is to be admired that any should bring it for that end.

The second lesson which God would have *Ieremiah* to learn in the *potters house* was, that *Israels* marring and miscarrying, was from themselves, as God tells them elsewhere, *O Israel thy destruction is of thy self, not of me*: It is not probable, that the potter will bestow the tempering and fitting the clay, and then work it upon the wheel on purpose to break and spoil it: what potter on earth being

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in his wits uſeth to do ſo? neither muſt this marring be imputed to unskilfulneſſe of the potter, nor any efficient cauſe without them: no, the Text doth undeniably import, that the clay it ſelf only was in the fault: and that *Iſraels* deſtruction is of themſelves, is convincingly preſented in the parable of the girdle, *chap.* 13. when *Ieremiah* is directed to take a *linnen girdle*, not an ordinary, not a leathern, but one of the better or higher ſort of girdles, *a linnen girdle*, a laſting girdle, and whereas *Ieremiah* is forbid to wet it or hide it in a moiſt place, but in a dry place, in a Rock; *Ieremiah* is taught that *Iſraels* deſtruction proceeded from themſelves, and from no extrinſick cauſe: no moiſture, yet the girdle is marred and good for nothing: ſo here God would well convince *Ieremiah*, that *Iſraels* deſtruction did not ariſe from any external or violent means, but it was whilſt on the wheel, in the hand of the potter, in order to her exaltation: *Ieremiah* is brought to the *potters houſe*, to be taught that their deſtruction is from themſelves. And as the Apoſtle in another caſe ſaith, *he that imputes the preſent ſin and eternal deſtruction of men to God, let him be accurſed; for God would have all men ſaved, and no man periſh.*

3. God would have *Ieremiah* learn in the *potters houſe*, as to *Iſrael*, that their becoming a diſhonourable veſſel was not the antecedent deſigne of God, but the ſubſequent deſigne of God: the potter at firſt deſigned it an honourable veſſel, but it is upon its marring that he proceeds to make it *another*, as ſeemed good to him to make it: it was then become obnoxious to the ſubſequent will of God, which then, and not till then, deſignes it a diſhonourable veſſel: which is undeniably plain, if

if we reade verſe the 9. 10. *at what inſtant I ſpeak concerning a nation to build and plant, if that nation do evil in my ſight, I will repent of the good that I ſaid I would benefit them*: Gods antecedent will was to plant and builde, his ſubſequent minde to pluck up and deſtroy.

The 4th Leſſon that the Lord would have *Jeremiah* to learn in the *potters workhouſe*, was, that God hath ſole and abſolute power over his people, even ſo, and much more then the potter over the clay, to diſpoſe it at his pleaſure; therefore (ſaith he) behold, or take notice, that *as the clay is in the hand of the potter*, or power of the potter, *ſo are ye in my hand, ſaith the Lord*: Gods propriety is clearer and more abſolule then a potters power can be: for the potter, and his clay, and all are Gods; the potter hath power from his propriety and intereſt; he may do what he will with his own but ſtill for his own advantage, much more may God; if the potters clay will not ſerve him for one end, it muſt for another: if his clay will not yeild and comply for an honorable veſſel, can it complain, though he diſpoſe of it to be a diſhonourable veſſel? ſo if *Iſrael* will not comply with Gods deſigne, and ſerve him in their own land, they muſt ſubmit to ſerve his end in their enemies land as a diſhonourable veſſel.

5. God would have *Jeremiah* learn in the potters houſe this leſſon, that the liberty that God claims to himſelf in making diſhonourable veſſels, is ſuch a power as the potters is, onely over thoſe who by voluntary diſobedience and rebellion refuſe his offers of grace and honour: God claims no liberty over that nation or perſon that repents under the threatnings againſt it, as is eminent *ver.* 8.

Jer. 18. to make them vessels of dishonour: so that from what hath been spoken upon *Jer.* 18. we may perceive that it wil be very useful in handling this 21. verse, to carry our eye upon this so parralell a place, which will be greatly helpful in order to a right understanding: and I will in the fear of God appeal to the readers conscience, whether by what God hath spoken to *Jeremiah* you can gather such an opinion, that God hath either before, or in the creation, of his meer pleasure and will, ordained or made of the earth, vessels of wrath, upon a meer personal account; the whole neither savours of, nor favours such an opinion in the least, the power which this heavenly potter claimeth, is, that when persons have imbased themselves by a course of actual sinning and rebellion against his grace and mercy, then to turn his hand and make them dishonourable vessels.

But I shall now return to the words as here they lie delivered by the Apostle.

Ver. 21. *Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessell to honour, and another to dishonour.*

By way of explication here are four words which I shall speak a few words unto.

1. What potter is here intended.
2. What kinde of power this is.
3. What is this clay.
4. Why is it here added *of the same lump?*

Of these a few words briefly.

It is the general received opinion of men, that these words *potter, clay, power,* and *lump, vessels,* and

and such like, are all spoken comparatively: By *potter* the Apostle means a common ordinary potter; and herein he argues from the lesser to the greater, in this similitude, that God is fitly resembled to a potter, who works in that material of *earth* and *clay*: and thus the Church stiles God, *Esay.* 64. *we are the clay, thou art the potter*: God like a potter makes of low, vile man, honourable vessels; hath not the potter, any ordinary potter, power over the clay, to make it what vessel he please? and when a piece thereof runs course, and is marred upon the wheel, then without controul hath he not power to make it a less honourable vessel? and hath not God the same, and much more power over you who have imbas't your selves by slighting and abusing all those mercies that he hath designed to prefer you and make you honourable: to be plain (saith the Apostle) why may not God for your obstinacy, and disobedience and rebellion to his son, as zealous as you are for the law of *Moses*, of a glorious people and invested with all those extraordinary priviledges, make you a base and contemptible people? and besides you continuing still in your unbelief, make your condition far worse in the world to come? such a Paraphrase as this, seems to bear a sweet harmony with the place alluded to *Jer.* 18. as also with the scope of the whole context, and with the Apostles conclusive result, *vers.* 32. *that they did not attain it, because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law.*

2. By power here must not be understood bodily strength or might, the potter may be a weak man, and yet have this power spoken of here; the word here translated *power* signifieth *priviledge* or

prerogative, and so the same word is understood, *John* 1. 12. *power to become the sons of God*, that is, as most understand it, *priviledge*. So here it is to be understood of an uncontroulable prerogative in God by this similitude: but there seems to lye a considerable objection in this kinde of arguing of the Apostles: doth it not seem strange, that the Apostle doth take so much pains to assert the power and prerogative of God? are there any in the world who own God that question this truth? the Apostle seems to insinuate, that the hardening and rejecting of the Jews, was founded in the absolute uncontroulable will of God, rather then upon their own wickedness: *he hardens whom he will*: *the thing formed must not say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?* and so in this simillitude, *hath not the potter power:* might not the Apostle (may some say) more properly have insisted upon their rebellion as the only cause? and instead of saying, *he hardens whom he will*, have said, *he hardens those who reject his grace:* what may be the reason why the Apostle argues this way rather then that? are there any that deny this power of God? I answer that the Apostle knew what he did and said of this kinde, though the Jews did not deny the power of God in one kinde, yet they did question and also deny the equitable proceedings of God, as we may see, *Ezek.* 33. *they were bold to say the ways of the Lord were not equal in his dealings towards them:* and further they questioned his wisdome and truth, in his severe dealings with them, who were the children of the promise to *Abraham*, and who walked in the law of God appointed by him to their fathers: they did question, yea deny, that God could justly cast them off upon any terms, or disin-

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herit them, let their manners be what they would, though greatly degenerated & corrupted by moral evils, yet as long as they held to temple-worship they could not be made dishonourable: therefore it is no wonder though the Apostle argues with them after this manner, it is undeniably plain, that the Jews would not allow God the power of the potter, to make a dishonourable vessel of marred clay; they lookt upon themselves to be the children of *Abraham* in the best sence, whilst they were children of the devil in the worst sence, *John* 8. 39, 40, 44. so their fathers were of the same spirit, *Ier.* 5. 12. they did conclude *no evil should befal them*, nay their prophets told them so: see 23 *chap.* 17. *though they walked in the imaginations of their own hearts*: such a spirit appeared from them, *Ier.* 7. though they did steal, committed adultery, swear falsely, yet they thought God had no right of power to punish them, so long as they cried *the temple of the Lord*: and reade but *Rom.* 2. from *vers.* 17. to the 23. and you shall see these are the very same to a tittle, they made their boast of their Jewship and law: it is no new thing for formal professors to make their external professions a sanctuary in their own conceit, to shelter them from all evil: O horrid mistake! God hath power to make the best of men base and contemptible, if they live not up to their near relation to God, notwithstanding any seeming priviledge to the contrary; So much for the *potter* and *power*.

The *d* circumstance is the *clay*, *power over the clay*; we have the Apostle in the following verses in this similitude still taking pains to humble this proud people, in laying before them their own vileness: He doth not say, *Hath not the potter power o-*

ver the clay that he may do what he will with it? from his propriety in it because it is his, but because it is *clay*: and this part of the similitude sets out the Jews imbased condition; now by sin they were become clay; time was when they were comparable to fine gold, *Lam.*4.2. but by sin become as earthen pitchers: that place is full to this purpose, to shew how sin abased *Israel*: Gods people in their sanctified estate are compared to *vessels of gold*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 20. but in their sinful state to *vessels of wood and earth*: But some may say, hath not the goldsmith also power of his gold, to make vessels at his pleasure, some to dishonour? to which I answer,, if the goldsmith makes dishonourable vessels of his materials, to answer the ambitious desires of some, yet the worthinesse of the materials may admit of a question, *why hast thou made me thus?* so that it is the clay that is liable and obnoxious to be made a vessel of dishonour, and the makers power incontroulable in so making of it: the serious consideration of this circumstance will help us much in our present businesse, and agree marvellously to the parallel place of *Ier.*18. for God did not take *Ieremiah* to a goldsmiths or silversmiths workhouse, but the *potters house*, to shew *Ieremiah Israels* abased estate, as now our Apostle doth.

Now these who hold personal eternal election before the world began, must also understand, that God makes vessels of dishonour, of gold or silver, not clay, of innocent persons, for so was man made in his first creation in *Adam*, and in him he resembles the goldsmith not the potter; and so the work may be admitted to say, *why hast thou made me thus?* but if of *clay*, the thing formed of that

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mean material, hath nothing to say: so that this similitude serves to humble and lay low the boasting Jew.

4. Why is it here added *of the same lump* or masse? I answer, This may be taken two ways, either by this whole lump may be intended the whole stock of *Abraham* and *Isaac*, unto whom the promises were made, and so considered; it anticipates the Jews Objection, which might have been this, that God accepted of some of the same off-spring of *Isaac* and *Iacob*; rejecting *Ishmael* and *Esau*; & to come nearer, some of this present lump of the Jews in the Apostles time, some believed, some contradicted and blasphemed at the gospel: of the same linage and party indued with the same priviledges; and thereupon were blinded and hardened, and rejected: so that in this sence *of the same lump, some are vessels of honour, others vessels of dishonour*: yet neither of them without a cause appearing in them, differing, *Act.* 28.24. some believed the things that were spoken, and some believed not.

2ly, By the *same lump* sometimes is to be understood, a double making, or an attempt of making the same, a vessel of honour, and upon breaking or miscarrying, to make the same particular lump again a dishonourable vessel; as it did not comply to be an honourable vessel; and is the very case in that parallel place in *Jer.* 18. where it is plain, that the same piece of clay that was upon the wheel intended for a vessel of honour, and breaking or marring, the potter thereupon, makes it again *another* vessel, as seemed him good, the same that was for another use: so in the parable of the *girdle*, *chap.* 13. the same that cleaved to Gods

loins for a name, and a praise, and glory, is that *girdle* which is marred and profitable for nothing; and this is as certainly true, considered of *Israel* in general; they all in general were as to their outward state vessels of honour, they were the glory of the world, *the head not the tail*: the same Jews, the same people, distinguished by all these priviledges, *verse*, 4. 5. of this *chap.* are now abased, scattered, desolate, for rejecting Gods designe, marring in his hand upon the wheel: but take it either way, it will not accommodate those who are for understanding this lump, to be the earth of which *Adam* was originally made: that God of that lump or masse in his first creation; made some vessels of honour and some of dishonour, is not in the least to be imagined from this, or any other text of Scripture, from the first of *Genesis* to the last of the *Revelations*: I am sure that hard favoured Opinion, hath no resemblance of the nature of the just, equal impartial good, *God*, *whose tender mercies are over all his works*, *Psal.* 145. and that this lump cannot refer to man in his Original, I shall offer five reasons.

1. Because in that Original making, there was made no difference in vessels, not then vessels of honour and dishonour, as is plain, they were all made innocent and upright, and see what God himself saith of what he had made of this lump, *Gen.* 1. *last. he saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was good*; *abundantly*, as the hebrew reads, no defect in it, or in any thing, as was then made; to which *Solomon* gives testimony, *Eccle.* 7. *last*, *this one thing have I found, that God made man upright, but he hath sought out many inventions*: man in general considered, was made upright, therefore

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there were no veſſels of diſhonour.

2. If we ſtate this Original after the fall, and then ſuppoſe God made the difference, it will not yet hold, becauſe Jeſus Chriſt hath reſtored man into an equal capacity of being veſſels of honour, for the plaiſter in Chriſt is as large as the ſore in *Adam*, as appears clearly *Rom.* 5. 18. *as by the diſobedience of one condemnation came upon all, ſo by the righteouſneſſe of one the free gift came upon all men.*

3. Becauſe if by a veſſel of diſhonour we mean a ſinful man, as well as a miſerable man, then we ſhall make God the author of ſin and diſobedience, which is far enough from God to do; he doth not uſe to neceſſitate that which his ſoul abhorrs; the potter did not deſignedly break the veſſel on purpoſe that he might make it a diſhonourable veſſel, when it was more for his intereſt to make it a veſſel of honour. I remember what *Ainſworth* obſerves upon *Gen.* 1. and *laſt*, this ſheweth (ſaith he) that ſin and evil is not of God or by the work of his hands, but come in after by the creature it ſelf falling from God: to which he cites the ſame place, *Eccleſ.* 7. 31. It is a known maxim, and a proverb, that God did not make the devil nor a wicked man; it is true, he hath made or ordained wicked men for puniſhment, as *Solomon* ſaith, God made man but not ſinful man.

4. Neither could our Apoſtle mean this Original making in *Adam*, in this text or context, for theſe three reaſons.

1. If ſo, it might well have ſilenced him as to his blaming the Jews, when the defect lay in the root and Original.

2. It had been altogether improper if this had been ſo, to make ſo clear an appeal to *Jer.* 18. by

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way of illuſtration, when we finde that the abuſing *Iſrael* was the fruit of their actual diſobedience and rebellion againſt God, as is plain in the former part of that propheſy.

3. Beſides this the Apoſtle gives an exact account why and how *Iſrael* came to miſſe of juſtification and honour, which was becauſe *they ſought it not by faith*, but as it were *by the works of the law*.

5. If God had deſignedly made veſſels of wrath, then would he have taken pleaſure in filling them with wrath, which he doth not: we have his ſolemn oath to the contrary, *Eze.* 18. but of this more in the next verſe.

That which remains as to our cloſing up this *verſe* is after the manner of an expoſition, to ſum up thoſe doctrinal concluſions which doth offer themſelves to our conſideration from the words thus explicated, which are theſe: there are ten Doctrines obſervable from this 21. *verſ.* worth our noting, which I ſhall only name, and ſo proceed: which are as followeth.

Doctrine, 1. *That God in his handling and dealing with ſinful men is pleaſed to reſemble himſelf to a potter, a mean tradeſman.*

God thought a potter and his clay and his proceedings thereupon a meet reſemblance for inſtruction to the prophet, *Ier.* 18. and would have *Jeremiah* ſtudy the metaphor, the proceedings of the potter, to ſet forth his proceedings with *Iſrael* as they were ſinful, degenerated from him, called marring in his hand, the Church in her humble and low eſtate doth acknowledge God the *potter*, ſhe

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the *clay*: I gave a threefold reaſon, why God is ſtiled a *potter* and we the *clay*, which I would not have forgotten.

1. From the meanneſs of the material that God works in as well as the potter; the potter works in the loweſt materials, not in gold or ſilver, braſs or iron, but earth.

2. Becauſe, if the potter makes a very mean veſſel of ſuch materials, it cannot take exception, or ſay, *why haſt thou made me thus*? becauſe it was at beſt but clay.

3. The potter doth make curious work, a rare and excellent veſſel of clay, ſo doth God many times of great ſinners; he makes of *Saul* a choice veſſel of honour, though of a perſecutor, *Act.* 9.

2. From the Apoſtles taking ſuch pains to aſſert the power and prerogative of God indefinitely, I note this ſecond doctrine.

2. Doctrine, *That God is not tyed to any perſon or people by vertue of any promiſe or covenant, but only conditionally.*

The promiſes of God made to *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob*, are only conditionally as their ſeed ſhould be *found*, *walking in the ſteps of the faith of Abraham*, *Rom.* 4. 12. *Gal.* 3. 19. *if ye be Chriſts, then are you* Abrahams *ſeed*: here was the Jews miſtake, they thought God could not reject them as his ſeed outward.

3. Doctrine, *That ſin and diſobedience is of an imbaſing nature, it makes man the higheſt piece of Gods creation.*

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Comparable to the earth, the potters clay, for we find this similitude used to set forth meanness & baseness, when applied to men; this comparison is used by way of imbasement, *Esa.* 29. 16. *shall be esteemed as the potters clay*: the prophet designes by this similitude to disparage their work and forwardness in turning things upside down: it shall soon be broke: to the same end is that similitude made use of, *Esa.* 41. 26. and *Lament.* 4. 2. *sin made vessels comparable to gold, to be esteemed but as earth.*

4. Doctrine, *For people or persons to presume upon God for impunity and acceptance with him, meerly upon the account of external acts of Religion and worship, when living in a course of sinning in morals, is a great and dangerous mistake, and will end in the greatest disappointment imaginable.*

This was the very case with this people to whom our Apostle speaks, and it ought to be a warning to us; it was the case of those, *Mat.* 7. compared with *Luke* 13. they were such and so disappointed.

5. Doctrine, *That Gods rejecting, hardening and reprobating men, rightly understood, is so equal, wise and just, that it admits of no plea or acception by man.*

No more then for a potter to make a mean and contemptible vessel of a piece of clay that will not yeild and comply to the wheel, or hard to be made for a higher use: who can in this case finde fault with the potter? if indeed a goldsmith should so

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abaſe his higher mettel of gold, to make a contemptible baſe veſſel, ſome might have a mouth open to ſay, it is pitty ſuch a choice material ſhould be ſo made, even ſo it might admit of ſome kinde of objection or finding fault, if God ſhall make veſſels of wrath of innocent men, but it is far from the judge of all the earth to do ſo.

6. Doctrine, *That the power which God claims,* which anſwers to the potters power according to *Jer.* 18. *is a power or prerogative to harden, reject and reprobate, only for a courſe of actual rebellion and diſobedience againſt Chriſt and the Goſpel.*

When God is taking pains to make them honourable, and they mar or break in his hands, to this remember that former inſtance of the girdle, *Jere.* 13. which doth greatly contribute to this truth.

7. Doctrine, Of the ſame lump upon a double notion take this doctrine.

That even of Abrahams *poſterity and family to whom the promiſes were immediately made, proceeds diſhonourable veſſels.* Iſhmael *and* Eſau: this is plain, *ver.* 7. 8.

From the ſecond underſtanding of the ſame lump made over again, we note.

8. Doctrine: *That the ſame people or perſons at diſtinct times may be honourable and diſhonourable veſſels.*

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This is plain from the forenamed place, *Ier.* 18. *he made it again* another *veſſel*: the ſame girdle that did cleave to Gods loins before, is afterwards marred and good for nothing, *Ier.* 13. ſo on the other hand, 2 *Timothy* 2. 20. *the veſſels of wood and earth*, upon purgation, may become *of gold and ſilver* fit for their maſters uſe.

From theſe two words *honour*, *diſhonour*.

9. Doctrine, *One great part of the ſaints reward for obedience and holyneſs conſiſts in glory and honour.*

Pſal. 110. *ſuch honour have all the Saints*, *Pſal.* 68. 13. though they have lain amongſt the pots they ſhall be glorious; ſo ſaith Jeſus Chriſt to his diſciples, *John* 12. 26. *if any man follow me him ſhall my father honour*: what God ſpake to *Eli* is true in this caſe, 1 *Sam.* 2. 30. *he that honoureth me I will honour*, *Rom.* 2. *glory and honour to every man that worketh good*, which glory and honour is in the higheſt ſervice they ſhall be put into as veſſels for their maſters uſe.

10. Doctrine, *That a great part of the puniſhment of ſlighters and diſobeyers of God ſhall conſiſt in ſhame and diſhonour.*

They are called veſſels of diſhonour, *he that deſpiſeth me*, ſaith God, *ſhall be lightly eſteemed*, this is the portion of the wicked in the reſurrection, *Dan.* 12. *they ſhall riſe to ſhame and contempt*.

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From all that hath been ſaid, learn this one inſtruction.

That to be veſſels of diſhonour is the effect and reward of actual ſin and rebellion, not Gods abſolute eternal decree of reprobation, there is not the leaſt whiſper in this text with *Ier.* 18. that way: ſo I have done with *vers.* 21.

We now proceed to *verſ* 22,23.

CHAP. XIV.

Plainly explaining who are veſſels fitted for deſtruction, and who veſſels of mercy; and why both become ſuch: alſo aſſerting, that perſons even fitted for deſtruction may yet be in a capacity of repentance while God ſpares them with his patience.

Ver. 22. *What if God willing to ſhew his wrath, and make his power known, endured with much long-ſufferings the veſſels of wrath fitted for deſtruction.*

23. *And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the veſſels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory.*

THe Apoſtle in theſe words is yet futther vindicating the juſtice and righteouſneſs of God in hardning whom he will, according to his former concluſion, *ver.* 18. againſt which concluſion the cavilling, captious Jews, raiſeth their Objection, *verſ.* 19. *thus,* if God hardens whom he will, why doth he, or how can he juſtly complain or finde fault

fault with those so hardened by him? considering that this will of his in hardening is irresistable, *who hath resisted his will*? now the Apostle in this 21.22. 23. verses is labouring to maintain, that God may very justly complain of such.

1. Not only from his unquestionable and uncontroulable power and prerogative.

But 2ly, His equitable regulation of his power, in that he hardens none but such as first harden themselves, or become clay, or marred clay: he hardens none as men, nor as sinners, simply considered, but such as have highly provoked him.

But 3ly, From his manner and method he takes in hardning, which is by means more proper to soften then harden, namely, by long-suffering and suffering, and consequently with a sufficiency of means to keep them from further hardening and patience: he doth endure them with much long-also to mollifie and soften them; that which answers to the clay marring in the potters hand, is the abuse of Gods mercies, long-suffering and goodness; and as the potter may without offence or contradiction, from his clay, make that a vessel to dishonour, who will not comply nor yield to the hand or wheel, to be a vessel of honour, so God may as inoffensively and unquestionably make those persons or people dishonourable, who despise and abuse his patience and long-sufferings towards them: from the words the Apostle argues from the lesser to the greater, if the potter may do so to make of the same lump (these circumstances considered) one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour, the lawfulness of which power none can question, much more unquestionable and apparently equal and every way just, is that power in

in God which he exerciseth in destroying terribly those who shall abuse his great patience; so that it is very plain, that Gods great long-suffering exercised over sinners doth marvellously vindicate and magnifie his justice and righteousnesse in their destruction: what made *Pharaohs* signal and dreadful destruction so unquestionable but this, that God waited so long upon him, gave him so many deliverances from judgements under all his reiterated rebellions: from this foot of account it is, that all men do vindicate Gods proceedings with his circumcised *Israel* first and last, that *he had stretched out his hand all the day long to them*, Rom. 10.21. *whilest they were a gainsaying people*: God might have destroyed *Pharaoh* upon his first act of rebellion, as he might also have dealt with *Israel*; *but what if God willing to shew his wrath, and make his power known, endured with much long-suffering*, as it is in our Text.

This 22. *verse* is another considerable passage to reflect light upon the whole passage if it be well weighed and considered, and doth undeniably offer satisfaction to all that are ingenious and willing to be satisfyed in the controversy; for in this passage we may plainly perceive, that the Apostle in the whole doth not designe in the least to assert or maintain personal, peremptory and absolute reprobation from eternity; for if he had so designed, the words had more properly run thus; *and what if God willing to shew and declare his sovereignty over men, was pleased from eternity absolutely to determin and decree, that the far greater number of mankinde should be vessels of wrath*: (what is that to thee?) but from this context it is plain, that God doth neither reprobate men as men, nor as sinners, simply,

ſimply conſidered, but as graceleſſe rebellious ſinners, ſuch as have highly provoked God by a courſe of obſtinacy: therefore the words runneth thus; *And what if God willing to ſhew his wrath, and make his power known, indured with much long-ſuffering thoſe who have made themſelves veſſels of wrath?* yet God waits upon them who are ſo fited, in theſe verſes, as alſo in the whole context: the Apoſtle hath a ſpeciall eye vpon *Pharaoh*; for there ſeems in theſe words ſome anſwer to what we have, ver. 17. *for this ſame purpoſe have I raiſed thee up*, or made thee to ſtand, *that I might ſhew my power in thee*, that is, have ſhewn thee ſuch ſignal deliverances at thy requeſt ſo many times, that if thou doeſt not humble thy ſelf at laſt, thy deſtruction may be the more dreadfull and amaſing to all the world: but I ſhall come more cloſely to the words as they lye in theſe two verſes, as to the nature of theſe words in the Judgement of the moſt rationall; they are the reddition or application of the former compariſon of the potter, ver. 21. we know commonly a parable conſiſts of two parts.

1. The parable or compariſon it ſelf.

2. The application, ſo as here; the Apoſtle hath formed a compariſon of a *potter* in a proper ſence conſidered, *ver.* 21. ſo here we have the application, as between the *potter* and his *clay*, and his prerogative over it; ſo now he applys it between God and rebellious ſinners, and his power he may juſtly claim over ſuch to deſtroy them.

And that which ſome object concerning the form of theſe words, will not rationally contradict, but that theſe verſes are taken as an application; that which is offered in contradiction is becauſe theſe verſes are laid down interrogation-wiſe, *what if*;

to which it may be replyed, that it is usual so to render the application of a parable, as appears, *Mat.6. Luke* 12. *Mat.*6.23. *If thy eye be single; If thy eye be evil, Luke.*12. *Luke* 18. *Shall not God avenge his own elect?* so that it is no strange thing to finde the application of a parable rendred interrogation-wise; and as in that place it is rendred argumentation-wise, from the lesse to the greater, so here; as thus: if the widdow by importunity obtained an act of justice from one that had it not in himself, of one that feared not God, nor regarded man, much more shall the elect obtain of God who is naturally inclined to acts of justice and mercy; thus must it be understood here: if the *potter* have power to make a dishonourable vessel of the marred clay, God may much more destroy those terribly which withstand his grace and abuse his long-suffering: all are not of opinion, that these verses are the application of *ver.* 21. but those of cleerest understanding in this context, are: and there are four Circumstances considerable to confirm our belief, that these verses are the application of *vers.*21.

1. From the relative particle (*and,*) which is in the Original, though not in all Translations so englished: and it is taken notice of by some very Learned men, that the Translators have not dealt very fairly with us; an English word for it it will very well bear: and two of our old Readings so expresse it, *and what,* or *even so what if God*; so *Tindall* reades it: the Vulgar Latin reades, *and if God:* all which readings do own these verses as the application.

2. It is the judgement of most Interpreters that these words are not perfect sence without borrowing

rowing some supply somewhere else; there seems (say they) to be a defect in speech, for here are Questions propounded, *what if God willing to do so or so?* but no answer given to them: but if we borrow these words, *ver.* 21. *hath he not power?* and place them in the end of these verses, it will make the reading good sence: *hath not the potter power to do so and so?* and *what if God willing to shew his wrath, and make his power known?* hath he not power much more? Some Learned men are so sensible of a defect in this case, that they fetch supply from *ver.* 20. *who art thou that replyest against God? What if God willing to shew his power?* but I think that nearest to us will do us the best service.

3. That which inclines me and others to think that these verses are a reddition or application to the comparison, *ver.* 21. is for these two Considerations.

1. Because there is nothing else delivered by the Apostle in all the context that can be so properly answering to it as these.

2. It is not at all likely, that in a similitude of so great importance concerning the prerogative of God over his creatures, and so liable to diverse and various interpretations, and not to leave with it its application; it is not usual in matters of lesser concernment so to do.

4*ly*, That which may fully satisfie us of the relation of these verses, is that sweet harmony between them in the substance of the matter: In the comparison there are two sorts of vessels:

1. *Some to honour, and some to dishonour*, in the power of the potter.

2. As the *potter* makes his dishononrable vessels of

of his marred clay, according to *Ier.*18. so God makes his of such as despise and abuse his long-suffering grace in his continued applications to them: these are those whom he claims a right to harden and reprobate, such as have thereby fitted and prepared themselves for destruction, as *Pharaoh* and the Jews have done.

3. As the *potter hath power of the same lump to make honourable vessels*, so God will of all those who comply with his terms of grace in Christ, *make them vessels of honour whether Jews or Gentiles*; so that we may perceive, that these verses are given as an application of the comparison, *ver.*21. *hath not the potter?* the great designe of the Apostle in these verses is to exalt and magnifie two great attributes of God.

1. His *powerful wrath*, or *the power of his wrath.*

2. The attribute of his *enduring mercy*, both which attributes of God the Apostle would have the Jews to know, were magnified in the Gospel-dispensation: there is a revelation of both these, *Rom.*1.18, 9. but my principal work upon these *verses*, will be explication, wherein I shall enquire into these seven circumstances.

1. What may we here understand by *Gods wrath?*

2. By his power?

3. When are they said to be shewn?

4. In what sence is God said to exercise long-suffering?

5. What capacity are they understood to be in on whom God is said to exercise this long-suffering?

6. What doth God expect or aim at in this his long-suffering thus exercised?

7. What kinde of sins makes persons vessels of wrath?

Of each of these a few words briefly, in the first especially.

1. Wrath here as to God must be understood with an emphasis, *great wrath and anger*: we often reade in Scripture of the *wrath of God*, though wrath in God is not rage as many times in man, but his wrath is known by the effects of it, according as we have it propheſied of, *Esay.* 42. 25. *he shall roar, and tear, and rend.*

2. *Power*, by power in this place is not the same word which we have before, *ver.* 21. *hath not the potter power over the clay?* that is, authority, priviledge or prerogative; the same word which we have *Joh.* 1, 12. but here is another word which signifieth *might, strength*, to avenge himself of his adversaries; therefore we have it here in conjunction with *wrath*, which makes it the more dreadful, for wrath without power signifieth but little as to the dread of it; but in God there is wrath and power mixed together, which being so mixed is so great, that *David* puts it to the question, whether any can know it? *Psal.* 90. 11. *who knows the power of thine anger?* it is most dreadfull indeed.

3. But what doth the Apostle mean by the shewing or making of it known? I answer by the effects of them openly as in *Pharaoh:* God did shew his powerful wrath in his destruction, as the Apostle speaks, *ver.* 17. *for this purpose have I raised thee up, that I might make my power known in thee*; that is, in thy dreadful destruction: now this shewing Gods wrath and power doth relate to Gods proceedings with rebellious sinners in this world, yet not with all such sinners nor all reprobates alike, but such as have highly provoked God: the Scriptures

tures are plain, that Gods dealings with reprobates is not to all alike: few are dealt with like *Pharaoh.*

4. How is long-ſuffering to be underſtood in God? I anſwer God cannot properly be ſaid to be long-ſuffering, God cannot ſuffer: it is only a borrowed word, and ſpoken to our underſtanding: it is a word hard to be tranſlated into our language, therefore our old tranſlations gives it us in the latine, *longanimitas*, which according to the Hebrew ſignifieth to be *long before angry*, or *long of noſtrils*, or as we ſay; *ſlow to anger*, not ſoon angry: the learned makes ſome difference between patience and long-ſuffering; long-ſuffering being when we have power to revenge, yet defer it, or delay to do it; this is eminent in God, who is not haſty to execute his wrath on thoſe who have highly provoked him by rebellion.

5. What capacity are thoſe in of whom the Apoſtle ſpeaks, to whom God doth exerciſe this his long-ſuffering?

1. I anſwer, it is generally to be underſtood of the rebellious unbelieving Jews, who had highly provoked God by killing his ſon.

2. I anſwer negatively, theſe people or perſons are not under an unalterable decree of reprobation, as ſome would have it, God doth not exerciſe long-ſuffering upon thoſe who are under ſuch a capacity.

But 3*dly*, This is a certain truth, that all thoſe that are under thoſe long-ſufferings of God are in and under a poſſibillity of repentance: theſe are thoſe on whom God waits with deſigne and expectation of repentance, therefore not reprobates by any abſolute decree; wherever God neither

willed nor expected repentance, though he granted a reprieve for a time from the punishment; in such case the Scripture doth no where call this forbearance by the name of *long suffering*: as for instance, the devils torments are respited for a long time from his fall so many 1000 years: yet this respite is no where stiled long-suffering, neither can it properly be so said, that God exerciseth long-sufferings to the devils; yet that their torments are suspended for a certain time is plain, from their words to Jesus Christ; art thou come to torment us before the time? so in *Sauls* case: the execution of Gods judgment threatned upon *Saul* is suspended for a time, yet it is no where said to be an exercising long-suffering upon *Saul*: and the reason is, because as to these and such like, Gods decrees of punishments were absolute and irrevokable, and so no repentance expected: whereas on the other hand whereever there is inducing, waiting and long-suffering, and expectation on Gods part, it doth satisfactorily teach, that such persons are not under an absolute decree of reprobation as the devils are; yea, the old world of whom S. *Peter* speaks, 1 *Peter* 3.20. though they had sinned so greatly as they had, that *it grieved God at the heart, that ever he had made them*; yet because Gods resolution as to their destruction was but conditional, not absolute, but like that of *Nineveh*, it is therefore said, that *the long-suffering of God waited or expected in the days of* Noah: God expected repentance all that 120. years and offered them means accordingly by the ministry of *Noah*; so it was with *Pharaoh*, though he was so bad, yet so long as God afforded long-suffering to him, he expected repentance from him, as appears by

by the means he uſeth with him to the laſt: ſo we may ſay of the Jews, of whom we are ſpeaking, they were in and under the long ſufferings of God, and God expected repentance from them, and blames them for not repenting and believing all the while: ſo that take this for a ſure and infallible rule, that thoſe perſons or people whoever they are, who are under the long-ſufferings of God, are not ſhut up under an abſolute decree of reprobation, but repentance is required and expected from them: as ſee *Rom.* 2. 4. the *long-ſufferings of God leadeth to repentance*: ſo 2 *Peter* 3. 19. compared with *ver.* 15. *long-ſuffering to us-ward, not willing that any ſhould periſh*: the long-ſuffering of God is ſalvation, whereever it is exerciſed without exception, that is, the deſigne and tendancy; ſo that thoſe *veſſels of wrath fitted for deſtruction*, are not under an abſolute decree, becauſe under Gods long-ſufferings. It is true, that through the baſeneſs of mens hearts, which is ſo ready to abuſe this his long-ſuffering, they many times grow worſe under the mercies of God, as *Pharaoh* did: to this *Solomon* ſpeaks, *Eccleſ.* 8. *becauſe judgment is not ſpeedily executed againſt an evil doer, his heart is fully ſet in him to do evil*: wicked men (as one ſaith) deals with God, as birds do with a ſcarecrow, afraid of it at firſt, and dare not come near it; but in time it not ſtirring or moving towards them, they grow bold, and will fly to it, and ſit upon it; ſo by the long-ſufferings of God, wicked men grow hardened, and worſe and worſe; ſo that the means appointed to repentance, through the baſe heart of man, doth harden to deſtruction: ſo that Gods will of *ſhewing his wrath, and making his power known*, in this place, muſt be underſtood

understood only conditional, not absolutely; that in case persons are not overcome by his long-sufferings, then this manifestation is to take place: this was the very case with *Pharaoh*: if Gods rising him up so often at his request, did not humble him, and bring him to let his people go, then he *would make his power known in him*: from hence it is plain, that the Apostle in this place, is not treating absolute personal reprobation, but of a conditionall and specifical.

The Sixth thing to be enquired into, is, about this *fitting* and *making up for destruction*, with respect to the time of it, and the author of it: there are not a few who have drank in that opinion, that this fitting is by God from the beginning, by an absolute and eternal decree of reprobation; but in the very considerate and deliberate reading, the words will inlighten and inform us better, and other ways: *fitted*, this word I finde but three times used in the whole Scripture, that is 1 *Kings* 6. 35. *Proverbs* 22. 18. and in this place; and in all these places it signifieth, deliberately to prepare, to proportion, to finish, to compleat, and not at all to ordain or decree; neither can the word be understood in that sence: but that which I would enquire after, is the author or operator in this fitting, by whom is this fitting accomplished; it must be either of God or themselves; I answer, this fitting is not appropriated to God except accidentally and subsequently, as God is said to harden *Pharaoh*.

1. The truth of this appears in the different reading of what relates to the reprobate, and the elect in these two verses: if God did in any sense *prepare, or fit these vessels of wrath to destruction*, as he prepares the vessels of mercy to glory: why

should

should the spirit of God render these two so differently, appropriating the one unto God, and not the other, he doth not at all intrust God in the one, nor man in the other.

A Learned man doth well observe upon this place, that this difference in reading doth import something worthy our consideration, and this difference is taken notice of as considerable, even by those of the Calvinists opinion; one of them saith, they are fitted by God and themselves also; this a very antient Writer saith, on this place, *not* (saith he) *for Gods pleasure, but his own desert, for* (saith he) *if they deserved it not, his pleasure would have been to have saved them.*

2. It is plain, this fitting is not of God, because Gods applycations of long sufferings is towards them, as such so fitted, to be a means of their reducing from that state of fitnesse for destruction, to a state of preparedness for glory; for it is undeniably plain, that this fitnesse is not, as some would have it, the effect of Gods enduring them, but they are said to be fitted before God, who did thus endure them with long-suffering: and it cannot be properly said, that God doth endure them especially with much-long suffering till they have first highly provoked him by a voluntary course of actual rebellion, which doth prepare persons for destruction, as it did *Pharaoh*, who was fitted for destruction after the first plague, much more after all the six plagus; yet after this God waits under four plagues more: thus it is plain, that persons may be said to be fitted for destruction, before God is said to endure them, so that all this endurance as is exercised from the beginning to the end of it, is upon such as he may justly destroy the

first

first day of his applycations to them; so that it cannot be fairly gathered, that this fitting is wrought, much less ordained or decreed by God, but by sinners themselves: but against this it is objected, that according to this notion men may be said to make themselves vessels of wrath or dishonour, and how then doth it answer the terms of the text, and the instance of the potter who is said to make vessels of each sort? I answer, that even in the similitude of the potter, it is plain, that the potter doth not antecedently make vessels of dishonour, but only subsequently, when they will not be otherways formed; as you have largely heard from *Ier.* 18. it is marring of the clay that precedes its being a vessel of dishonour; the potter designed it for honour: so that man anticedently, and God subsequently makes vessels of dishonour.

2. God is no where said anticedently to make vessels of wrath, but much on the contrary, *to make men upright*, *Gen.* 1. *God made men very good, but they found out many inventions*: it is true, there is a way how God may be said to make vessels of wrath, that is, by making a law or decree wherein he doth declare what sort of sinners shall be vessels of wrath, and so they come judicially to be vessels of wrath: in this sence must that saying be understood, *Jude* the 4th. certain men of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, *turning the grace of God into wantonnesse*; so that for God to decree or ordain vessels of wrath, without respect to quallifications, doth not answer the potters power in the comparison, nor other places of Scripture: the potter doth not claim this power, to make vessels of dishonour of the clay, because it is his own goods, as men would suppose in God,

but

but becauſe it is clay, and not only ſo, but marred clay, not meerly from his ſoveraignty or propriety, but from its vileneſſe; which liberty might be allowed the potter, if he were a ſervant, and the clay none of his own: ſo that this fitting is to be underſtood the voluntary act of the creature not of God; and theſe words contains a declaration of Gods carriage towards thoſe whom he meets with, fitted and prepared for deſtruction; he endures with much long-ſuffering ſuch as they; but it is objected, doth not the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeak of ſome made to be taken and deſtroyed, 2 *Peter* 2. 12. which ſome apply to this place, and to Gods making? I anſwer.

1. This word is not expreſt in the vulgar Latin, but in the room thereof; they reade *tending to the ſnare and deſtruction*; and ſo *making* ſignifieth an *aptneſſe* or *fitneſs*, which may be taken one for another.

2. What is ſpoken of and unto perſons in an actual courſe of ſin, yea, bruitiſh ſenſuallity, and not ſpoken of men as men; and ſo this making is appropriated to themſelves.

3. Theſe perſons ſpoken of here are ſome of thoſe over whom the long-ſuffering of God was waiting, 2 *Peter* 3. 9. *not willing that any ſhould periſh*; therefore not made ſo by God under any unalterable decree of Reprobation.

The ſeventh thing to be enquired into is, how perſons comes to be veſſels of wrath? in ſpeaking to which head, I ſhall

Firſt, ſpeak a few words to this borrowed word *veſſel*.

2ly, Shew you what kinde of ſins are theſe preparing ſins that prepares for wrath.

1. The

1. The Apostle here calls those of whom he speaks by the name of *vessels*, both the reprobate, and the Elect; the Original word here translated *vessel*, doth not always intend a hollow vessel to contain things liquid or dry: but in the *Hebrew* the Apostle calls the instruments of the temple or tabernacle, tongs and fireshovels, yet elsewhere are called *vessels*; but it is commonly and properly that by a *vessel* is meant a *cask* or *vessel* to contain: men are called vessels from a threefold consideration.

1. As they are the fruit and product of labour and art, as well as designe, and some vessels are more curiously wrought & fixed according to what they are to contain, either liquid substance or dry, yet all vessels made are the fruit of labour; wicked men takes pains to make themselves, they weary themselves to destroy themselves; men are not these vessels in their Original, but by their formation; the clay in the lump is not the vessel, till it be formed and shaped by gradual proceedings, so men come to be vessels of, or for wrath, by a gradual and followed course of actual sin and rebellion. We reade of *children of wrath*, *Ephes.* 2. but we must make some difference between *children of wrath*, and *vessels of wrath*; children of wrath respects the aversnesse of our nature against God, but vessels of wrath respects Gods wrath to men, who are fitted and formed to it.

2ly, They are called *vessels*, because they are to contain what is put into them, therefore saith the Lord by the prophet *Jeremy*, *chap.* 13. speaking of men, *every bottle shall be filled*; vessels are not made to keep always empty, but to contain; when *Saul* is called a vessel, *Act.* 9. it was with respect to what

what God is to put into him; he is to contain and carry his name amongſt the gentiles; ſaith the Apoſtle, *we have this treaſure in earthen veſſels.*

3. Called *veſſels of wrath*, becauſe God doth deſigne to fill them with wrath, as a veſſel is filled with liquor to pour in wrath, as liquor is poured into a veſſel, made for that purpoſe, till it be brimfull: for this wrath ſhall not only be without but within: *I will* (ſaith God to *Pharaoh*) *pour all my plagues upon thy heart, they ſhall be within as well as without thee:* thus we ſee that wicked men by rebellion againſt God do form themſelves into *veſſels of wrath*: but that which I have yet a few words to ſpeak unto, is this, what ſins are thoſe that tend to make men veſſels of wrath, or prepare perſons for wrath, as a veſſel is prepared to contain things moiſt or dry.

I anſwer in general, firſt reiterated acts of diſobedience and rebellion againſt the known and declared will of God; this was the caſe with *Pharaoh* and with the Jews.

2. More particularly ſlighting and abuſing the faithful ſervants of God, ſent of God, who ſeek your ſouls and bodies good: this alſo in particular was the caſe with *Pharaoh*, he threatens *Moſes* and *Aaron*, who came from God upon a meſſage for his good, yet tells them, *that if they ſee his face any more they ſhall die*: this was alſo the caſe of the Jews, ſee 2 *Chron.*36.16. *they mocked and miſuſed his ſervants, till the wrath of God brake out without remedy*: this was the caſe with the latter Jews, See *Matt.*21.40. *chap.* 23.37. *they killed the Prophets, and ſtoned them that were ſent unto them.*

3. Sins of hypocriſie in the worſhip of God, *Iob* 36.13.

36.13. *the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath*: See with what indignation our Lord appears against the hypocrites, *Mat.*23. eight woes pronounc't against them.

4. Such as abuseth Gods mercys and favours multiplyed upon them, and grow worse under mercyes, as *Pharaoh* did, and so did *Israel*; see *Psal.* 78. *hereupon the wrath of God brake out upon them*: see *Rom.* 2. 4. *abusing Gods mercies, they treasure up wrath against the day of wrath.*

5. Voluntary contracted hardnesse of heart, this hath been shown at large, *Pharaoh* hardened his heart a long time, when neither mercies nor judgements will touch or penetrate the heart, that resisteth the touch, impenitent hearts precedes wrath.

6. That sin that prepares a person for wrath is unbelief and gospel-disobedience: see for this, *John*, 3. 36. *the wrath of God abideth on such*: Rom. 2. 8. 9. *those who do not believe on, or obey the truth, tribulation and wrath*: 2 *Thes.* 1. 8. *he shall come in flaming fire, rendring vengeance on them that know not God, nor obey the gospel*: there are several gradual steps by which persons are formed to be vessels of wrath.

But that which remains, is to sum up those doctrinal conclusions that do offer themselves from the words thus opened.

I shall only name six doctrins and proceed.

1. Doctrine, *That Gods proceedings with disobedient rebellious sinners is more inoffensive and equal then the proceedings of the potter with his marred clay.*

This

This reddition or application is argumentation, arguing from the leſſe to the greater, as if he ſhould ſay, *and ſhall not God much more?* the unreaſonable ſtupidity of the Jews was ſuch, that they would not allow God that power which they would allow a poor potter as to his clay; that after much enduring and long-ſufferings upon diſobedient and rebellious ſinners, he might then make them veſſels of diſhonour.

2. Doct. *That God is admirable in his attribute of long-ſuffering and forbearance as to the worſt of ſinners, over ſuch as are fit for deſtruction.*

Wicked men are the ſubjects, the proper ſubjects of Gods long-ſufferings; it is not a little but much long-ſuffering that is exerciſed over them.

3. Doct. *It is not the work of God but the work of men themſelves to prepare and make themſelves fit for deſtruction; God findes men fit for deſtruction when he thus endures them.*

4. Doct. *That which vindicates and juſtifieth the Revelation of Gods wrath and revenging power, is his precedent long-ſufferings exerciſed towards them.*

If God would ſhew his wrath and make his power known convincingly, to ſtop every mouth, he uſhers it in with *much long-ſuffering*, and thoſe who have had moſt long-ſuffering from God, may expect moſt ſeverity from God, *Mat.* 11.22. *Rom.* 2. *Rev.* 18.

5. Doct. *That persons fitted and prepared for destruction may yet be in a capacity of repentance, whilest God spares them,* See three Scriptures, *Jer.* 36. 3. 7. *Chap.* 26. 3. *Ezek.* 12. 3.

6. Doct. *That the power which God claimeth and exerciseth in hardning whom he will, respecteth not men as men, nor men as sinners simply considered;* but it respects men as they are already actually prepared and compleated for destruction: such as he may justly destroy whether he harden them or no; so that the proper subjects of Gods wrath and reprobation are such as not only highly provoked God by sin and disobedience, but after all abused his long-suffering towards them.

So much for *ver.* 22.

CHAP. XV.

Shewing the super-abounding riches of Gods grace to sinners, for their encouragement to turn and persevere through all difficulties in well-doing, the rich favour and glory they shall enjoy to all eternity.

Ver. 23. *And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory.*

THese words seems to be a continued speech tending to vindicate the just and unquestionable power of God, not only to make vessels of

dishonour

dishonour subsequently, but much more properly and antecedently to make vessels of honour and mercy; both which answers to the power of the potter, in the comparison before: as God may justly on the one side make them vessels of dishonour who withstand his formation of them and abuse long-suffering extended to them, so he may much more make them *vessels of mercy*, who shall be found complying and tractable to his will, and so be prepared for glory: the Apostle seems to lay great stresse upon this preparing and fitting, as considered on both sides, only here is an apparent difference, he entrusts God in this latter not in the other; It is clearly appropriated to God, to make vessels of honour or mercy, but no such application to the other: God is not unwilling to be accounted the authour of preparation for glory; we have the Apostle in these words offering a second reason of Gods enduring with such long-suffering the vessels of wrath, that had fitted themselves to be destroyed, not only that he might have the clearer ground of advantage against them to shew his wrath, and make his power known in their eminent and remarkable destruction, who should so abase his long-suffering.

But 2. That by his so enduring he might make manifest and declare by way of eminency his grace, love and mercy, upon them who should be prevailed upon by such his mercy, to comply to his holy will; the Apostle argues thus, if God shews such mercy to his worst and most provoking enemies, much more to his obedient friends, *Joh.* 15.14. *ye are my friends when you do whatsoever I command you*: Gods mercy exhibited to the old world who were so wicked, *that they had grieved*

God to the very heart by their sins, is a ground to beget faith in Gods singular choice love and respect to his friend righteous *Noah*, who had been singularly righteous before him in that generation; so Gods long-suffering to *Pharaoh* to spare him so long, doth demonstrate his fuller respect to *Israel* his first-born, who were in *Goshen*, where his plagues came not: that singular favour shewn by the father to the prodigal, doth demonstrate a greater love to the elder son, that had not so done amiss: therefore the father tells him, *he was always with him, and all that he had was his*: the potters taking pains with a crackt and marred vessell (that hath made it self obnoxious to his will to be destroyed) to make it a vessel of honour, doth highly declare his very high estimation to that vessel, which is a vessel of honour, more then if he had ground the marred vessel to pouder.

So that to issue the matter in a few words, Gods great love to sinners demonstrates his singular and choyce love to saints. These words are two ways understood.

One way is according to what I have declared as the argument is drawn from *Gods mercy* to *the vessels of wrath*.

2. There are some, yea not a few who understand this argument, to be drawn from the severity of God to them, that he shews and exerciseth his wrath on them, that the *riches of his glory may appear to the vessels of mercy*: from thence some of them of that opinion, renders it in these words, that *Gods shewing his wrath*, and *making his power known*, in the dreadful destruction of reprobates, commends and sets off upon terms of far greater acceptance, the riches of his grace and love in the

salvati on

ſalvation of the elect; or thus, (as ſome ſay) God making ſo many reprobates greatly advanceth his love to the elect; he makes the reprobate drink the dregs of his wrath, that his mercy may be the more ſweet to the elect: as two contraries ſets off each other the better: but that this latter cannot be the ſence of our Apoſtle in this place, we may be ſatisfied in the very reading the words: for if that opinion were a truth, yet it doth not appear from this context, that ſuch an opinion hath any footing in it as may be eaſily ſeen: for here it is undeniably plain, that the argument is drawn from Gods mercy to the reprobate: the Apoſtle ſeems to argue ſomething like this, *chap. 5. if God had ſuch love to enemies, as to give Chriſt for them*: he argues, *with a much more as to thoſe reconciled, as to their ſalvation.*

Here are couched in our text two reaſons, why God doth endure, and not ſudainly cut off and deſtroy ſuch as have highly provoked him.

1. That in his ſo doing he may leave himſelf without excuſe, and caſt all the blame upon the ſinner.

2. That from theſe his proceedings in ways of mercy to ſuch ſo unworthy, he may offer a demonſtrative ground, how great his glory ſhall be which he will ſhow and beſtow on thoſe who are bettered by mercy. God did do ſomething for this end, that he might make known the riches of his glory on the believer.

But I ſhall briefly enquire into ſome words and circumſtances in this text by way of explication, and ſo haſten to draw up thoſe Doctrines which flow from theſe words ſo opened.

As first, what is here to be understood by Gods glory?

2. Why is it added *riches of his glory?*

3. What it is to have this *riches of glory* known?

4. Who are these *vessels of mercy?* and why are they so called?

5. How is the making these vessels of mercy appropriated to God, different from the former?

6. What may we understand by this preparation?

7. When is it accomplished?

Of each of these a very short word.

1. this glory twice spoken of in this text, is two ways understood, somtimes it is taken as the effect for the cause; it is sometimes taken for that in God which is just matter to glorify God, matter of honor & glory to him; the due consideration whereof renders God glorious and worthy of admiration and adoration: this is to be understood by the words of Jesus Christ to *Martha*, *John* 11.40. *I told thee* (saith our Lord) *if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of the Lord*, that is, thou shouldst see that for which thou shouldst glorify God; therefore this glory of God is commonly referred to Gods power and his grace, because from these appearances from God, for the most part, men are apteſt to glorify him.

2. By Gods glory sometimes is intended his power it self, as *Rom.* 6. 4. *Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the father*, that is, the power of the father, *Ephes.* 3. 16. *according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might.* 2 *Thes.* 1. 6. called *the glory of his power*: and often it is applyed to his grace, as *Ephes.* 1. 6. 12. 16. sometimes

glory

glory is ſpoken of as the portion of believers in the life to come; ſee 73 *Pſal.* 24. *receive me into glory. Pro.* 3. *the wiſe ſhall inherit glory. John* 17. 22. *Rom.* 2. 8. 1 *Peter* 3. 13. I am inclinable to believe, that the latter is intended in this verſe, that which is the portion of the veſſels of mercy, is glory, and the portion of the others is deſtruction.

2. Why is this word *riches* added? *that he might make known the riches of his glory on the veſſels of mercy?* I anſwer, *riches* ſignifieth abundance of whatſoever is ſpoken of: this metaphorical word is often borrowed by the Apoſtle *to do ſervice*; in commending the attributes of God, and the future glory of the Saints; ſometimes it is borrowed to ſet out the unconceivable fulneſs of Gods attributes: we reade of the *riches of Gods goodneſs*, *Rom.* 2. 4. *deſpiſeſt thou the riches of his goodneſs?* we reade of the *riches of his wiſdome and knowledge*, *chap.* 11. 33. of the *riches of his grace*, *Eph.* 1. 7. and again, *the riches of his glory*: and we may from hence know, that whatever God is furniſhed with, he is richly and plenteouſly filled with: God is rich or plenteous in all his attributes.

2. Sometimes riches is applyed to the future reward of the Saints, *Rom.* 10. 12. *the ſame Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him*; for he that calls upon him ſhall be ſaved, *Epheſ.* 1. 18. S. *Paul* prays, that *they might know the riches of his glory in the inheritance of the Saints in light.*

3. What is it for this riches of his glory to be known?

I anſwer, there are two ways of making things known.

1. When they are brought to open and occular

view, to make a thing obvious; in this sence the glory of God can be no more seen then himself by man in a mortal state.

But 2ly, things are made known when they are discovered by arguments to be so to the understanding; and in this latter sence it is most like, the Apostle here intends: it is Gods designe to exhibite an argument or *Medium*, by which men may be led to this knowledge of the *riches of Gods glory* in himself, and in his distributions: God is not wanting in his dispensations to men of sufficiency of means of knowledge and understanding, whereby they may come to make an estimate in themselves, how abundant rich in grace and bounty God is to them that obey him.

4. Who are these vessels of mercy, and why so called? it is granted on all hands, that these vessels of mercy are such as once were miserable, and of the same lump of those who *were dead in sins and trespasses*, according to *Ephes.* 2. whilst they were walkers according to the course of this world, these have obtained mercy: all which is comprehended in that word (*called*,) *verse* following, where these *vessels of mercy* are so described, *even us whom he hath called: vessels of mercy* are such in their call, not in their decree.

2. Called *vessels* by a metaphor, because as vessels properly called, have a particular form given them by the artificer, who maketh and formeth them, to be commodious and fitted to receive and hold things liquid and dry, which is put into them: so these are called *vessels* as they are formed and fashioned by God by his word and spirit; converted, regenerated persons are as vessels, they are the fruit of Gods work and workmanship, *Ephes.* 2. 10.

10. thus these formed by *God* are fitted to hold the mercy of *God* to all eternity; so that whilst men are *dead in sins and trespasses*, they are destitute of this formation, and so uncapable to hold present mercy or future glory: *vessels of mercy* are such as have suffered a new formation.

5. Why is the making these vessels of mercy appropriated to *God* differently from the former?

1. As we are in pursuance of the application of the comparison of the potter: I answer that the potter may in a more special relation be said to make vessels of honour, because he makes them antecedently such, but he makes vessels of dishonour but subsequently, upon their marring; so those that are *Gods* vessels of mercy are so antecedently: *God* hath his primary designe answered in them, but the Scriptures doth not appropriate the making of vessels of wrath to *God*; we have an apparent difference in reading: the vessels of wrath are said to *be fitted* and *prepared* passively, or in a passive sence, but *God* is not interested in it by the Apostle, but these are said positively to be *prepared by God, which he hath prepared unto glory*: and there is little reason why *God* should be interested in making *vessels of wrath*, seeing he hath so often disclaimed his willingness that any should be such: and we have his oath, that *he takes no pleasure in any's being such.*

I remember one on this place saith, If God made vessels of wrath, he would take pleasure to fill them with wrath, but that he is unwilling to do: but why is God in special interested with making vessels of mercy, and it is not appropriated to man at all?

I answer, first from Gods Original designe, will and

and desire; *he wills all mens salvation, that they would accept of his mercy:*

2ly, He gives Jesus Christ as the effectual means to work us to this form, *Ephes.* 2. created in him.

3. It is of him as he occasions the publication of the gospel, with all tenders and offers of grace.

4. Because he follows the soul with the continual strivings and operations of his spirit within, in order to sanctification; by which it comes to be a vessel fit for its masters use, 2 *Tim.* 3.21.

But why are these (by a variation of terms) *vessels of honour*, called *vessels of mercy*?

I answer first, *mercy* supposeth *misery*, that these as well as others were found in by God.

2. They may be called *vessels of mercy*.

1. As they contain *mercy* here.

2. Because they contain *mercy* to all eternity.

1. They contain *mercy* here, as they are partakers of the grace and mercy of the Gospel, in opposition to the law; they have it not by debt for work done, but by free grace: for the dispensation of the Gospel is called *mercy* in this *chap. ver.* 16. *chap.* 11.30. 31. 2 *Corinth.* 4. *as ye have received mercy, yea faint not, Ephes.* 2. 4. the Gospel is *the sure mercy of David, Act.* 13. *Gal.* 6.

2. *Vessels of mercy*, as they are to contain mercy to all eternity, as *Jude* saith, *looking for the mercy of our Lord to eternal glory.*

6. How are we to understand this preparation (*afore*?) why *afore*? from whence some argue thus; That those who are the *vessels of mercy* are only such who are necessitated to be such by an absolute decree from eternity; there *being vessels of mercy* in time, is the effect of a decree of God afore-time, and that upon a *meer* personal account,

they

they were ſuch before they were born; To this I anſwer, that this word *afore* or *before*, is of late foiſted in, and is not in many approved copies; neither *Tindal* nor the *Vulgar Latin*, nor the tranſlation of the *Church of England* againſt the *Colledge of Rhems*; and it will better ſute with the Original to leave it out, and read only, *which he hath prepared.*

2ly, Had it been the Apoſtles deſigne to aſſert their eternal predeſtination to this mercy upon a perſonal account, doubtleſſe he would have rendred it in a word which ſignifieth to *ordain* or *decree* and not render it *prepare*; which word ſignifieth another thing, *to form*, *make fit* and *ready* gradually, as appears in theſe Scriptures, *Matt.*22.14. *chap.*26. 17. 19. *Luke.*1. 17. *Luke.*9. 52. *chap.* 12. 47. 2 *Timo.*2.21. *Revel.* 19. *Heb.*11. *Noah* prepared an ark, wrought it with pains and art with many a ſtroke: but ſuppoſe it ſhould have ſignified *to ordain*, it could not have croſt the text nor Scriptures in general; for it is granted, that God did predeſtinate and unalterably decree that all believers in Chriſt ſo perſevering ſhall be *veſſels of glory*: but what need we depart from the grammatical ſence of the word *prepare*? the *prepared ones* are the *veſſels of mercy.*

7. When is this preparation accompliſhed?

I anſwer in general, that it is the work of a Chriſtian all his days to *prepare*, and it is Gods work alſo to *make him meet for the inheritance of glory to come*, *Col.*1. 12. it was *Pauls* labour, *ver.*28. *that he preſent every man perfect in Chriſt Jeſus*, it muſt ſuppoſe a holding without cracking till they are finiſhed, as the potters veſſel, for a perſon is not accounted meet by God for a tranſlation into

celeſtial

celestial glory immediatly upon repentance, faith, and obedience; though they may then be termed *vessels of mercy*, but there is a great deal of sanctifying and preparing work to be accomplished before we be meet for Communion with God in glory. *Heb.* 10. ye had need of patience that *after ye have done the will of God ye may inherit the promise*; glory is to be sought for by *patient continuance in well-doing*. 1 *Tim.* 6. 17. 18, 19. there are good works to be found in order to laying hold of eternal life.

Having thus opened the words, that which now remains, is to give you those Doctrines that doth arise from them: I shall sum up the whole into seven Doctrins.

1. Doctrine, *That Gods present bounty, goodness and mercy extended to very high hardened, provoking, disobedient sinners, and very rebellious persons, doth exhibite a sufficient ground of knowledge of Gods unconceiveable grace and mercy towards those who by the help of his grace repent, believe, and obey the Gospel.*

God who is regular and uniform in all his proceedings, must needs love his freinds dearly, if he so love his enemies; this doctrine I shall but touch only, I would leave two words of inference upon it.

1. Study the dimension of Gods grace to the world, to enemies, to such as walk contrary to him; *he causeth the sun to shine upon the good and bad, gives rain and fruitful seasons to the worst of sinners*, nay, he gave Christ for the worst of sinners.

2ly, Study

2ly, Study the immenſe and unconceivable love that God bears to the veſſels of mercy, *O what great goodneſſe hath God laid up for them that love him.*

2. Doctrine, *That the portion of believing obedient holy perſons, is a ſtate of unconceivable glory:* The ſaints and people of God are deſigned for glory.

How often is the future ſtate of the ſaints ſtiled *glory, Pſ.*68.13. *Mat.*13.43. *they ſhal ſhine like the ſun in the kingdome of their father*: they ſhall be equal to the Angels, thoſe glorious creatures: it is called, *Epheſ.* 1. 18. *the riches of the glory of the inheritance*: *they ſhall be glorious within, glorious without, Phil.*3. *laſt. who ſhall change our vile bodies and make them like his glorious body*; a great change ſhall be on the ſaints in that day.

3. Doctrine, *It is one peice of the great condeſcending grace of God to mankinde to declare and make known beforehand for encouragement, what rich glory and favour they ſhall enjoy who for the preſent are tractable and conformable to his will, even to all eternity.*

How full of precious promiſes are the Scriptures throughout to ſuch, of which promiſes (one ſaith) they are,

1. The breathings of divine love and affection.
2. The life and ſoul of faith.
3. The anchor *of hope.*
4. *The wings of prayer.*
5. The true foundation of induſtry.

6. The

6. The rays and beams of the son of righteousnesse; God hath given us great and precious promises *that we may have strong consolation.*

From the Apostles variation in his terms, *honour, mercy.*

4. Doctrine, *That to contain the saving mercy and grace of God is a state of great honour.*

To be vessels of mercy is honourable, to be vessels of honour according this Text supposeth three things.

1. That there is or hath been an act of formation passed upon them to make them such.

2. They are supposed to stand upon terms of mercy in opposition to works, for these two are opposed all along.

3. It supposeth such as enjoy the mercy of pardoning grace and gloryfying to all eternity.

5. Doctrine, *That the present state of saints in this world is a state of preparation not of perfection.*

All men in this world are upon their making or marring; in this world they are all like the potters vessel upon the wheel: we are at present shaping and forming, in order to what we shall contain hereafter.

6. Doctrine, *That it is altogether necessary for the advancing Gods glory, that persons be compleatly fitted and perfectly prepared before they be glorified*

It is altogether needful, that persons be here moulded and shaped and made fit and meet for the inheritance:

inheritance: we reade of *working out* or *working through our ſalvation* that is, our meetneſs for ſalvation: this preparation doth conſiſt much in purification, and in ſubduing corruption, 2 *Tim.* 2.20. *if a man purge himſelf, he ſhall be prepared for the maſters uſe*: 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. *Heb.* 12. 14. thus *we cannot ſee God without holyneſſe.*

7. Doctrine, *That the ſpiritual work and workmanſhip in new creating and forming, and preparing perſons for glory to come, is and may fitly be aſcribed to God and the effectaal workings of his grace.*

To this the Scriptures are very full: I need not ſtand to ſpeak to them *Epheſ.* 2. 1. *Cor.* 2. 11. *Phil.* 2. 13. 2 *Corinth.* 5. 5. but how comes it to be aſcribed to God?

1. The whole means by which it is effected is of him, from firſt to laſt.

2. It can ariſe from no other, but of him, not of themſelves, *not of the world, not of the devil*: Theſe are all againſt this formation.

Uſe, how ſhould this teach us humility, ſee what a ſpirit our Apoſtle had in *Timothy* and *Titus*, as to this, *God who was rich in grace*: ſo St. *Peter* 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. *bleſſed be God who hath begotten us again.*

But ſo much for *verſe* 23.

We now proceed to *verſe*, 24.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

Gods love to the called, whether Jew or Gentile, is a very great and singular love, yet not so unchangeably fixed in this life, that neither the obedience of some nor rebellion of others can alter it.

Ver. 24. *Even us whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the gentiles*: or, as in the greek, *whom also he hath called.*

WE have contained in this verse a fuller amplification and description of the *vessels of mercy*, *who are prepared unto glory*; they are here said to be such as are *called*, they are not such by vertue of an absolute decree of election, but the Apostle placeth it upon actual calling: it is very plain, that these words are relative to the former verse, and calls us to look back to the former; some learned men takes these words to be exegetical and explanatory of the former, shewing us how God proceeds in making vessels of mercy, namely by *calling them*: the Apostle having been in the former parts of this chapter, taking pains to inform and convince the Jews, that God in his promise to *Abraham*, did not intend the natural seed of *Abraham*, according to the flesh, he is now shewing them which way the seed comes in, namely, by their being called, whether Jews or gentiles, not the Jews only, but also the gentiles; not all the Jews, nor all the gentiles, but only the *called* of both: I shall be very brief in handling this verse, and also the remaining part of the chapter, therefore I shall

ſhall ſpeak a few words by way of explication, and in order thereunto it is altogether needful to enquire what is meant by calling, (*even us whom he hath called*;) calling is two ways underſtood in Scripture, ſometimes it is taken in a large ſence for Gods invitation and calling by the preaching of the Goſpel to the ear; this calling is intended by Chriſt in the parable, *Mat.* 22. 3. where we reade, that Chriſt ſent forth his ſervants to call them that were bidden, ſaying, come: to which agreeth the parable of the labourers alſo, the ſending forth the Goſpel is this calling: now this calling barely conſidered, is common to thouſands that do not anſwer the call; who are to no degree prepared for glory, but whilſt they are under this call are preparing and fitting themſelves to be veſſels of wrath: whilſt they refuſe to come: of ſuch a ſort our Lord ſpeaks; *Mat.* 26. 16. *chap.* 22. 14. *many are called but few choſen.*

2. *Calling* is underſtood in a more ſtrict ſence in the Scripture, rather as the effect then the call it ſelf; perſons are ſaid to be called when they are found anſwering the outward call, by coming and complying by faith and obedience: thus *calling* is generally underſtood in Scriptures, 1 *Corin.* 1. 9. *God is faithful by whom we are called to the fellowſhip of his ſon: chap.* 7. is any called being circumciſed that is converted by faith and obedience to the goſpel, *vers.* 21. 22. *Gal.* 1. 6. *called you unto the grace of Chriſt, vers.* 15. *but when it pleaſed the Lord to call me by his grace:* theſe and many other places ſpeaks of calling as anſwered unto; and in this ſence our text is to be underſtood of an effectuall call, becauſe this call is a demonſtration of *veſſels of mercy*, ſo that calling according to our text

is comprehensive of repentance, faith and obedience, the whole new creature.

But 2*ly*, Why doth our Apostle subjoin these words to the former *vers.* 23. as with respect to the *vessels of mercy*? I answer the Apostle in this connexion and explanation is insinuating to the Jews the way how persons comes to be *vessels of wrath* and *vessels of mercy*; *vessels of wrath*, by obstinately withstanding, and not answering to the call of God, being sent unto; and invited according to the parable, *Mat.* 22. *Luke.* 14. but made light of it, were not prevailed upon, and so were excluded from any part of his provision.

But 3*ly*, Why is the obedience of believers here and elsewhere rather ascribed unto *Gods calling*, then to the creatures complyance, and answered, *whom also he hath called*, though we know the complyance of the creature is as absolutely necessary in order to bring forth this effect of preparedness for glory?

I answer, it may well both here and elsewhere be ascribed unto God.

1. Because Gods call is antecedent and primary to mans complyance; man had not sought after God, if he had not sought after man first, and called him first; what was foretold as to these people by the prophet *Esaiah*, *Esa.* 65. is true in this, God is said to be *stretching out of his hands all the day long to a gain-saying and rebellious people*, therefore it may well be appropriated to God.

2. God is not only the first but the cordial, importunate seeker and caller, he is unwearied in his calling; he calls again and again; how doth the truth of this appear in that parable? *Mat.* 22.

he ſends again and again, and that with argu-
ments.

3. It may well be appropriated to God, that we are called, becauſe he gives ears to hear, and legs to come, to anſwer his call; the abilities of the creature is every way of God.

Theſe things conſidered, it may well be aſcribed to God the caller, not our ſelves: but why have we this particle (*even* or *alſo*)? this *alſo* is to be underſtood emphatically, as taking ſpecial and ſingular notice of Gods ſpecial mercy and grace in this act of his calling, it doth marvellouſly demonſtrate the condeſcending grace of God; this alſo is often uſed emphatically in other places, as 1 *Theſ.* 4.8. *who alſo hath given us his ſpirit*: we have it four times emphatically uſed, *Rom.* 8.30,34. why have we this diſtributive ſpeech added? *not of the Jews only, but alſo of the Gentiles*; it is the ſaying of a learned man upon this word, we are to take notice that commonly when in Scriptures we finde things affirmed, it ſuppoſeth, that there are ſome that deny thoſe things, and when things in Scripture are denied, it ſuppoſeth ſome body affirming them; ſo the reaſon of this kinde of ſpeaking here, *not the Jews only, but alſo of the Gentiles*, was becauſe he knew very well, that the unbelieving and ſelf-opinionated Jews, were inclined to think, that if any people under heaven were priviledged with the choiceſt favour of God, they muſt be themſelves, if not only yet chiefly: now to take off this their opinion, the Apoſtle adds theſe words, *not the Jews only*: God hath by his goſpel diſpenſation pulled down the wall of ſeperation and partition, and made his goſpel-priviledges level to Jews and gentiles: he hath made no difference between Jews

and gentiles, having purified the gentiles hearts by faith, *Act.* 15. therefore our Lord in his parable sends into the high-ways, to the poor gentiles that had no riches to trust unto. So that we may perceive that the Apostle in this verse, is labouring to satisfy the Jews, who were like to be offended at his appropriating to himself, and those who had received his doctrine, the dignity of being vessels of mercy, who but a little before were in their condition: the Apostle gives them to know that this change was made by Gods calling some of each of them, *both Jew and gentile.*

Thus much for explication of these words, now that which remains, is to lay before you those necessary conclusions that present themselves unto us from these words, which are these that follow.

1. Doctrine, *That the character and description of those persons who are vessels of mercy, and prepared for glory, are such who by God are truly called.*

That is, who have answered to his call; Gods way in making vessels of mercy and glory is by calling them; such as are justified and glorified, are first called *Rom.* 8. therefore it lyeth upon each of us to make a diligent enquiry, whether we are called.

1. If thou art called, thou art removed from thy former state, 1 *Peter* 2.9. *out of darkness into light.*

2. If thou art called, thou hast obeyed what is made known to thee; as *Saul* did, *Lord what wilt thou have me to do?*

2. Doctrine,

2. Doctrine, *For persons to be effectually called, so as to give answer to the call of the gospel, is a choice and singular priviledge afforded from God.*

This doctrine is drawn from that emphatical word (*also*), which I told you was to be taken with an emphasis, for it is the character of the true seed of *Abraham*, and none else to be effectually called: the whole work of conversion in gospel-days, is comprehended in this, *to be called*: see the promise, *Act.* 2. 39. *it is to all that are called*: it is a choice priviledge to be called.

3. Doctrine, *It is very proper, and at once the duty and priviledge of a called person, to know and acknowledge his calling to God.*

This the Apostle did as to himself and as to others, *Rom.* 1. 6. amongst which we are the called, 1 *Corin.* 1. 9. *who hath called us*, 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. *Ephes.* 4. 8. study your former and present state, if *you be called* be thankful, *Col.* 1. 12. *Prier*

4. Doctrine, *That God makes no difference as to nations or conditions of men in his gospel calling or invitations.*

Not only Jews but gentiles, he calls the worst of nations or sinners by the gospel, see *Rom.* 3. 29. *it is one God who justifies the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith*, Gal. 3. 28. *there is neither Jew nor greek, bond nor free, male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus*: admire

the boundless mercy of God in the gospel to the worst of sinners.

5. Doctrine. *That the great and aggravating circumstance in the condemnation of men, whether Jews or gentiles, will be the rejecting, and not answering the call of God, not complying with Gods loud call.*

This doctrine is implyed whilst S. *Paul* is insinuating to the Jews the way how he and the rest come to be vessels of mercy and honour, both Jews and gentiles, *as they were called*, and consequently persons come to be vessels of wrath and dishonour *as they reject Gods calls to them, not being called*: the truth of this appears, *Prov.* 1. 24. *Esay.* 65. 12. 66. *Jer.* 4. 13. *Mat.* 23. 37. Gods call doth aggravate mans condemnation greatly, if they had not been called, their condemnation had been the less: our Lord layeth an emphasis upon his bidding those guests: *Luke* 14. *not those that were bidden that verse*; had they not been bidden, they might have had some excuse, but they rejected the call.

Use 1. How sadly may this speak to many in our dayes, that have had call upon call, yet not answered.

2. You that are in the Church, examine your selves whether you are truly called.

So much for *verse* 24.

Ver. 25.

Ver. 25. *As he ſaith in* Hoſea, *I will call them my people which were not my people, and her beloved which was not beloved.*

26. *And it ſhall come to paſs, that in the place where it was ſaid unto them, ye are not my people; there ſhall they be called the Children of the living God.*

We are now paſt the difficult and controverſial part of this chapter; therefore I ſhall paſs the more briefly through the remaining part of this chapter: and in order thereunto, I ſhall reduce what remains to be ſpoken unto in the cloſe of this chapter into four heads, and ſpeak to it under theſe four heads.

1. We have quotations tending to ratify and confirm what the Apoſtle *Paul* had inſinuated (at leaſt implicitly), concerning the admiſſion of the gentiles, upon believing in Jeſus Chriſt, *to be the true ſeed of Abraham and heirs of promiſe*: and that this was no new nor ſtrange thing, but what their own prophets had foreſeen and foretold ſhould be accompliſhed, either as to the gentiles, or ſuch as were in the ſame forlorn and rejected ſtate: this we have *verſe* 25. 26.

The ſecond head ſpeaks thus much, that God by vertue of his promiſe to *Abraham* and his ſeed, was not obliged to entertain in his favour, all or the greater number of *Abrahams* natural or federal ſeed, but the greateſt part, nay all except a very few, a ſmall remnant, have been liable to rejection for ſin, yea even in former times: this we have *verſe* 27. 28, 29.

3. Under the third head we have the Apoſtle ſumming up in a few words what he had been in

chief treating upon in this chapter, as to the way purposed and determined by God, in which men may obtain justification: this we have *verse* 30. 31, 32. in which we have an epitomy or abridgement of the whole controversie; from whence we may easily gather, what was the matter he had been running at in this chapter, because *they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law.*

Under the fourth head we have not only the more general and remote ground of this dreadful miscarriage of the Jews, but the very particular and immediate ground of it, they stumbled at that stumbling stone, that is, at Jesus Christ his obscurity and mean appearance in the world; this occasioned the Jews to be offended: Of these four heads I shall speak briefly in order.

The first of these heads we have contained in *ver.* 25, 26. which two verses contain a quotation drawn from two places in *Hosea, chap.* 2. 23. *chap.* 1. 10. both tending to the same matter; the terms of the whole citation doth import a very gracious promise of a singular alteration and change, which the Prophet foresaw to be made to God upon the present state of some people or other, for he doth not speak expresly, that these who are now, or shall be, in a poor and low, despicable state and condition, shall be changed to a state honourable and glorious, and admitted into the choyce and singular love and favour of God: we have a double description of their twofold state, negatively and affirmatively.

1. We have their state set forth under three circumstances, negatively, which they are under before this calling. 1. *They are not beloved.*

2. *They have not received mercy.*

3. *They*

3. *They were not then Gods people.*

2*ly*, We have as to their changed ſtate three affirmations.

1. *They ſhall be Gods people.*

2. *They ſhall be beloved.*

3. *They ſhall be children of the living God.* Thus we may perceive that the prophet had a clear and diſtinct proſpect of a great change of eſtate as to ſome people; but it is not expreſt *who*; there are ſome different apprehenſions amongſt expoſitors about this paſſage.

There are three opinions upon theſe words.

1. Some are of opinion that theſe predictions relate to the Jews only as to their return from their captivated ſtate, wherein they appeared, as if they were not the people of God, but caſt off by him, that yet there ſhould be a time again when they ſhould have the face and favour of God, and by him be owned for his people: and the truth is, the context *Hoſea* 1. 2. doth run much that way as to them, which makes *Calvin* very confident of that ſide, as if he thought none could contradict him.

But 2*ly*, There are many others that are of opinion, that theſe words are a prophetical prediction of the *calling of the gentiles*; becauſe they are ſaid to be *a nation not beloved, a people, not the people of God*; and thoſe appellations are commonly applyed to the gentiles in Scripture; and alſo becauſe the Apoſtle doth cite this ſaying in this place following, what he had ſaid *verſe* 24. as a relative to thoſe he there ſpeaks of *called, not of the Jews only but alſo of the gentiles*; of this opinion is *Pareus*, with much confidence.

But there are a third ſort, who judge theſe words of God by *Hoſea*, doth relate to both Jews

and

and gentiles, and are fulfilled in both Jews and gentiles; that they are both couched in these words; and I think they may well answer to both, not only to the Jews in their return out of *captivity*, but they will well answer to the acceptance and admission of the gentiles to the grace and favour of the Gospel: and so the Apostle *Peter* seems to apply it chiefly to the gentiles, 1 *Pet.* 2. 9. *which in time past were not a people, are now the people of God*: it is usual in predictions in Scripture, that they admit of several fulfillings; *so might this be fulfilled to the Jews and also to the gentiles*: and several others: for instance, that prophecy of *calling Gods son out of Egypt*, is several times fulfilled, once it is fulfilled in Christ, as *Mat.* 2. 15. so that *Jer.* 31. of *Rachels weeping for her children that were not*: this hath had two fulfillings already: so that *Psal.* 41. *John* 13. 18. so that the prophets might in the first place intend the Jews, and afterward it might relate to the gentiles also; but take it either way, as relating to the Jews or gentiles, it doth accommodate the Apostle in his designe: for if the Jews after they had been rejected from being a people, may be restored and accepted, why may not the gentiles also, seeing they are both in the same condition: it may be supposed, that it was not the chief designe of the Apostle in this place to prove or declare either the re-instating of the Jews into the favour of God after that cloud of displeasure which for a time had been spread upon them, the calling the gentiles to be a people, but rather to satisfy the Jews it was no new or strange thing, or that which might give them occasion to quarrel with him, for asserting, that a people now alienated from God, may be called, and answering his call

may

may be received into favour with him as his people; for the Jews and gentiles were both laid level, and were all under sin, as he saith *Rom.* 3. 9. what are the Jews better then the gentiles? we have proved (saith the Apostle) *that all are under sin*, and God makes vessels of mercy both of Jews and gentiles, and this (saith the Apostle) is no more then your own prophets do assert; *he will call them his people that were not his people*: so that the great designe of our Apostle in these quotations out of *Hosea*, was to convince the Jews that his doctrine was no new doctrine, that persons out of covenant, love, and favour, as the gentiles were, might notwithstanding be admitted; it may be taken notice of, that in our Apostles quotations of these Prophets, there are some verbal variations between the Old and New Testament; and this very usual with the penmen of the New Testament, when they cite the Old. But this know, that when it is so, it is neither negligently, nor ignorantly, but designedly, to accommodate the sence, and render the Text more lightsome: yet the difference here, is but small, not material, as we may see, if we compare *Hosea.* 2. 23. the Apostle instead of *mercy*, renders it *love*, which is more lightsome and Gospel; for *mercy* may be where *love* is not; so when the Old reade *sons*, the New reade *children*; which is still more evangelical: as to these words I would speak to them with respect to the authour, and the words themselves.

1. It is plain, that God is the speaker, it is God the Apostle intends, when he useth these words, for he saith also in *Hosea*, *I will call them my people*: Gods words and the Prophets words are the same: what the Prophet speaks, God is said to speak.

2. As

2. As to the matter spoken, and that lyeth in two parts.

1. A singular owning of a people to be his, who had been estranged from God, and out of his love and favour.

2ly, We have very emphatically described the *place* where this happy change shall be made, in the same place where they had been eminently taken notice of as a forlorn people, not owned by God, *ver.* 26. *It shall come to passe, that in the place where it was said unto them, ye are not my people, there they shall be called the children of the living God.*

For the opening the words, we are to understand, *that to call a people Gods people*, is matter of dignity, yea, great dignity and honour: things eminent and excellent are called Gods; so goodly Cedars, are *Cedars of God*, *Psal.* 36. the great mountains are called *the mountains of God*: an excellent man *a man of God*: so here to be called *the people of God*, is a title of dignity.

2ly, To be called in this sence is not meant to bear title, but it means they are so; they are *the people of God* really, as *Jer.* 27. where it is said of Christ, *he shall be called the Lord our righteousness*, is the same, as if he should have said, *he shall be the Lord our righteousness*: as in like manner, when the virgin *Mary* saith, *from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed*, that is, *shall reckon and esteem me blessed, or acknowledge me blessed*: so *shall be called Gods people*, intends no less, then *they shall acknowledge them to be so*: the children seting forth the near relation and tender love that God in this change shall bear to them: he shall carry it to them, as a father to children that are small and tender: living God in opposition to *Idols*. It is worthy

by our taking notice, how the ſpirit of God doth ingeminate and reiterate to the ſame effect in theſe veſſels, to aſſure us the truth of the matter treated on, that he will certainly own relation and love alſo, even to a viſible manifeſtation; a people who were or are at the greateſt diſtance in both: This doth inſtruct us, how full Gods heart is of goodneſſe to mankinde; how propenſe to goodneſſe, to paſſe by tranſgreſſion, and receive graciouſly: for *out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh*, as our Lord in another caſe ſaith: we have an eminent place to the ſame purpoſe, *Ier.* 32. 41. as to *Iſrael* in ſpecial, as to their return, *I will plant them aſſuredly, with my whole heart, with my whole ſoul*; what God doth for a people, he doth it heartily; therefore the deſigne of this reiteration, is not only to offer the certainty, but the cordialneſſe of this admiſſion into love and favour; ſo that (ſaith our Apoſtle) it is no ſtrange doctrine, for God to admit the gentiles into favour, who were at the greateſt diſtance, who *were ſtrangers and forreigners*: they may alſo become *fellow citizens with the ſaints and of the houſehold of faith: yea, children of the living God.*

Thus having briefly opened the words, it follows after the method that I have before obſerved, that I give thoſe doctrinal concluſions contained in them, which are as followeth; I ſhall but name them.

Doct. 1. *That what God hath done in former times, either in mercy or judgement, is ſignificant to us in Goſpel-days for our inſtruction.*

The

The Apostle brings down what God propheſied to *Iſrael*, therefore it is common for the Apoſtles to cite Gods dealings in both. 1 *Cor.* 10. *Jude* 2 *Peter* 2.

Doct. 2. *That the ſayings of the Prophets are the ſayings of God himſelf*, God ſpeaks in *Hoſea*.

This I had occaſion to take notice of before as to *Pharaoh*, that what God ſpeaks in his ſervants is undeniably and univerſally true; ſee *Luke* 1. 73. *God ſpake by the mouth of all his holy prophets ſince the world begun*, 2 Pet. 1. 21. *holy men of God ſpake as they were moved by the holy ſpirit*, therefore we ought to have a high eſteem to the ſayings of the prophets, as if God himſelf were ſpeaking unto us.

Doct. 3. *That for a people to be owned and accepted of God as his, is a very choice and great priviledge.* It was propheſied as ſuch, *I will call them my people.*

Doct. 4. *Which were not beloved*, from whence flows theſe two Leſſons.

1. *That Gods love or hatred with reſpect to perſons or people, is not unchangeably fixed.*

He may call them his people, that is, own them his people to day which were not his people yeſterday; he may love them to day that were not beloved yeſterday: the truth of this Doctrine you may ſee proved if you look back to our Expoſition upon *ver.* 13.

But

But secondly, I note from these words, *which were not beloved*, yet in a sence there was love from God to all men.

2. *That the love that God bears to mankinde, either Jews or Gentiles, before conversion and call, is no love in comparison of that love he bears to them who are truly called*: Or thus, *That Gods love to converted called persons, is a very great and singular love.*

That God bears love to mankinde is a truth in general considered, and is a truth asserted by our Lord, *Joh.*3.16. *God so loved the world that he gave his only son for them*; but that love that God bears to holy persons, to converted ones, to obedient ones, is a choice love indeed, a *love of delight*, Joh. 14.21,23. Joh.16 26. *the father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me*: It is great love that God bears to a prodigal upon his return, See *Luke* 15. 20. make this improvement,

1. To admire the greatnesse of this priviledge, to enjoy the love of God under this consideration, *a love of delight*: it is true, others enemies have his love of pity, *Psa.*145. *his tender mercies are over all his works.*

2. Admire the change in estate that is made upon conversion, that you that were not a people that were beloved, should now enjoy such priviledges, *Ephes.*2.

Doct.5. *That it is one circumstance of aggravation in the exaltation and the glorification of Gods people, that they shall receive their glory where they have had their shame.*

In

In the place where it was said ye are not my people, there i: This place may be considerable both upon a general and particular account.

1. In general upon the earth *Revel.* 5. 10. where the Saints have suffered, there they shall raign.

2. In particular which is more proper to our Text; we have a parallel place, *Zephan.* 3. 19. *I will give them praise and fame in evey land where they have been put to shame:* It will be a circumstance in the exaltation of Jesus Christ, that as he had suffered a shameful death at *Jerusalem* so he shall raign there in that place, *Esa.* 24. *he shall reign in* Jerusalem, *and before his ancients gloriously*; this is a great condescention in God to his people: and a manifestation of his choyce esteem to them.

2. It may be a great comfort to all faithful, suffering, humble, and abused saints.

Doctrine, 6. *Such as are the truly called of God have the living God to be their father.*

They shall be called the children of the living God: he takes pleasure to discriminate them and distinguish them from all other children and worshipers whatsoever: the Apostle changeth the prophets sons into children, to shew the singular priviledge of Gospel-saints; *they are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus:* O the great priviledge of all truely called ones, that have such a God! who only can swear *he liveth*: he hath all life in himself and gives all life spiritual and temporal.

But for brevity sake I shall say no more to the first head of the four, into which I reduced the latter end of this chapter.

We

We are now by course to speak to the second comprehensive head propounded to be handled, from the close of this chapter which is contained in the 27,28,29. *verses.*

CHAP. XVIII.

Plainly shewing, that it is not Number, nor being in relation to godly Ancestors that can secure rebellious persons from Gods wrath and destruction.

Ver. 27. *Esaias also crieth concerning* Israel *though the number of the children of* Israel *be as the sand on the Seaye a remnant shall be saved.*

28. *For he will finish the work and cut it short in righteousness; because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.*

29. *And as* Esaias *said before, except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed we had been as* Sodom *and been made like unto* Gomorrha.

IN which three verses we have the Apostles second testimony taken out of the prophet *Esay, chap.* 1. *chap.* for the Apostle in maintaining his grand doctrine of justification by faith alone, doth in the Jews apprehensions introduce two nations, which were hard for them to digest, which was these.

1. That by that his doctrine as well gentiles as Jews may become the people of God, that is to say, upon believing.

2. From this his doctrine follows, that far the greater number of the natural seed of *Abraham*, the Jews, who reject and abhor this doctrine of *faith*, must necessarily be rejected, and cast off by God, from being his people. Now the Apostle by concession doth allow both these nations to be truly and naturally deduced from the premises, and therefore doth bring the Testimonies of their own prophets, *Hosea* and *Esaiah*, to confirm the same.

The first of these testimonies we have considered already; we now proceed to the second testimony to confirm the Apostles notion, that *not all* nor the greatest number of the seed of *Abraham* shall be saved, but on the contrary, a very small remnant, according, to the testimony of that royal Prophet *Esaiah*, *chap.* 10. 22, 23. *chap.* 1. 9. As to the first testimony we may divide the matter into two parts.

1. The testimony it self.

2. The amplification of it.

1. The testimony it self is this; that of the vast and innumerable body of the Jews that went into the Babilonish captivity, though their numbers were as the sand on the sea, yet but a small number should return out of it to re-enjoy their own land; a remnant is taken for a very small part, in comparison of the whole piece; and we may take notice, that this prophet *Esaiah* looked forwards also in this his prophesy, even to gospel-days, and so their last estate is also taken in by him: for the Apostle cites this place of *Esaiah*, to suite with his present design, and the Jews present case, which appears plain enough, by the manner of the Apo-

stles

ſtles expreſſing this return, by the word *ſaved*, *a remnant ſhall be ſaved*.

2. The truth hereof appears from the Prophets amplification of this return, *Eſa.* 10. 21, 22. *they upon their return ſhall ſtay upon God*, in truth they ſhall return to the mighty God; which return ſome learned interpreters expound of *converſion*.

2. We have the Apoſtles amplification of this teſtimony in four circumſtances.

1. The author, the Apoſtle doth not deliver this from himſelf, but he gives the Jews their own Prophets teſtimony; if he had given this of himſelf, he knew it would not ſo readily have been received by them, but *Eſaiah* was a Prophet, againſt whom they could not object.

2. In this amplification, it is conſiderable, the manner of the prophets delivering this teſtimony, as our Apoſtle hath it here, *he cryeth*; ſhewing either his grief and ſorrow for them, or pathetical deſire that his prophecy might be heeded and regarded by them: and there ſeems to be an emphaſis, in the Apoſtles thus delivering himſelf, as if he ſhould ſay, *are you angry with me for implicitly whiſpering?* that but a few or ſmall number of you Jews, the natural ſeed of *Abraham*, ſhall be ſaved, when your own prophet *Iſaiah* cryed it out, and proclaimed it with a loud voice in the ears of your forefathers, when time was.

3. In this amplification we have the Apoſtles argument; as to the number of the children of *Iſrael*, they were *as the ſand on the ſea*, therefore the matter the more to be lamented, that ſo few ſhould return.

4. We have hinted in this 18. *ver.* by the Apoſtle the way or means how thoſe few or ſmall num-

ber comes to be ſaved, namely, by a ſhort word, or as ſome reade, ſhort account, which according to the beſt interpreters, refers to the conciſe contracted word of the goſpel: which is a ſhort word in compariſon of the law, but more to that anon.

The ſecond teſtimony which is in this 29. verſe is taken from *Eſa.* 1. 9. *except the Lord of hoſts had left us a very ſmall remnant, we had been as* Sodom, *and been made like* Gomorrha: this ſmall remnant our Apoſtle here turns, by the word *ſeed*: in this teſtimony we have two parts.

Firſt, the poſition it ſelf, a *ſeed* or *ſmall number ſhall return*, or be left, in the firſt, or converted in the laſt: not all or a conſiderable number, but a *ſeed ſhall return*; as a few returned out of the captivity, ſo a few ſhall be juſtified by faith in Chriſt, *chap.* 11. 6. *a remnant according to faith*, or the choyce of grace, a ſeed, it is a metaphor taken from a husbandman, who ſells or ſpends the greateſt part of his crop, and but a ſmall part is left for ſeed-corn to ſtock the ground, in order to a new harveſt: this poſition is amplifyed two ways.

Firſt, from the author of this reſervation: ſtiled here, Jehovah Saboath, *the Lord of hoſts*, as he hath all creatures at his command, in heaven and earth, whereby he is able to ſave and deſtroy at his pleaſure.

2. We have here ſet forth, the deplorable ſtate and condition of *Iſrael* conſidered in themſelves, who had been totally deſtroyed, if this Jehovah Saboath had not interpoſed: their total deſtruction is ſet forth by the deſtruction of *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*: but to come more cloſe to the words, as I obſerved before, upon the teſtimony of *Hoſea*, ſo here,

here, the Apoſtle doth not tie himſelf to exactneſs of words, but takes liberty to vary in ſome words from the letter of *Eſaiahs* prophecy in this quotation: we ſhall finde ſome verbal variations if we reade them together, yet no material or ſubſtantial, much leſs contradictious variations.

For explication I ſhall enquire into theſe three things.

1. How doth this teſtimony of *Eſaiah* accommodate the people in his preſent caſe? how doth it ſerve him at this time?

2. What may we underſtand by *Gods finiſhing and cutting ſhort his work*, and making a ſhort work in the earth?

3. Why is God as to this preſent paſſage ſtiled by this double name of *Jehovah Sabaoth*?

To the firſt, I anſwer, all the ſervice which the Apoſtle requires of this teſtimony at this time, is to ſatisfy his antagoniſts the Jews, that it need not ſeem ſtrange, or a new thing to them, much leſs an impoſſibility, or contrary to the promiſe of God to *Abraham*, that their whole nation, a very ſmall number only excepted, ſhould be rejected and abandoned for their diſobedience to the goſpel, ſeeing this had been again and again the ſtate of their foreſathers, from whom they claim at preſent all their priviledges; and that for their high provocations againſt God, as is teſtified by their own prophets: from whence it appears, that God was not tied to them firſt or laſt, according to the fleſh, but only to the righteous and faithful amongſt them, ſuch as had the faith of *Abraham*, who rejoyced in Chriſt: the Apoſtles argument lyeth here, if God at any one time caſt off the fleſhly ſeed of *Abraham* from his promiſes made to their

fathers, for their sin and disobedience; then he might do so again upon the like occasion; but that he hath done so before, you see plainly from your prophets; and thus the Apostle here brings the prophet *Esaiah* to confirm his doctrine of the rejection of the Jews for their unbelief, and crucifying Jesus Christ.

But our second enquiry is, how to understand the second *verse*? in the judgment of some judicious and learned interpreters, these words are not so properly rendred in our common reading as they might be: these words in the *Vulgar Latin* are read thus, for consummating a word and abridging it in equity, because a word abridged, *shall our Lord make on the earth*, the Church of England reads thus: in the Rhemish Testament Annotations, *for he will finish the word, and make it short in righteousness for a short word will the Lord make on the earth, or in the whole world*; so some greek copies reade: *Tindal* and most old readings agree, and reade, that which we commonly reade work, *word*; and the greek *logos*, and lattin *verbum* is so read; some will have this to signifie an account, and so they reade, *a short account shall the Lord make on the earth*, resembling God to an accountant, who is to adjust or ballance an account, set down his receits and disbursements, and the remainder to be the true account due: this *short account* or *word*, the antients, *Hierom*, *Anselm*, *Aquinas*, *Chrisostom*, *Ambrose*, *Cyprian*, and many more, understand to be *the word of the Gospel* or Christ; *the substance of it*, *the Word Incarnated*; for it cannot be thought, that these words, or this prophecy did only relate to *Isaiahs* time: that prophet had a clear sight of things to come, as we may perceive from many

many parts of his prophecy, *chap.* 8. 14. 28. 16. he foresaw that Christ should be for a *stone or stumbling and rock of offence*, and that many of the Jews should be broken, snared, and taken: *Esaiah* saw the latter as well as the former state of the Jews, but how may God be said to *shorten the account or word*? by *shortning* or *contracting*, is to bring it into a narrower compasse, as when we comprehend several words or lines in one, that is to say, that whereas heretofore the seed of *Abraham* were by themselves and others reckoned and looked upon as the peculiar people of God, and all the nations besides reprobates, now God draws his total sum, his compleat account out of both Jews and Gentiles, only so many of both as shall accept of his free grace in and through Jesus Christ they are his choice elect sum; God desires no more to ballance his account: Doctor *Hammond* is much of this opinion, God hath singled out his remnant, his seed, to be such only, who believe in, and obey Jesus Christ: so that this abbreviated word, *this*, this *shortned word*, is the *word of faith*: it is one word, the whole dispensation of the gospel is called *a word*, *Act.* 10. 36. God hath reserved to himself a remnant, according to the choice of grace by faith; and this short account or contracted word, in much goodnesse, and much righteousnesse, *he shall do this in righteousnesse*.

3ly, Why doth the Apostle in this passage stile God *Iehovah sabboath*, *the Lord of hosts*; some not for want of ignorance and oversight in reading, have from the sound of the word, thought that God had here stiled himself, *Lord of Sabbath*; but know, that these two words proceed from two different roots in the hebrew, & are 2 distinct words, *Shabbath*

bath and *tsabboath*: but I need not stay upon this: Our english reading may satisfy them in the matter: but why doth the Apostle in this place, and at this time, choose to render the almighty by these two names of his, rather then by any of his other eight names? we have it but twice used in all the New Testament: in *Iames*, 5.4. and here: I answer, in both these places, the Apostles designe is to magnify Gods power, as he is captain general of the whole creation, who are all in a military posture armed and visited at his command, they are all round about him waiting for his command, as he is Lord of hosts: but why doth the Apostle use it at this time? I answer to instruct the Jews, that it was not for want of power sufficient in God, for that he was *Lord of hosts*, that they were not first and last totally annihilated, like *Sodom* and *Gomorrha* who had so greatly sinned against him; but that there was a remnant spared; but it was the fruit of his withholding his power and exercising mercy.

2ly, On the other hand the argument is drawn from the power of the enemy, that God is here said to be *the Lord of hosts*, to let the Jews know, that the will and power of the *Babilonians* was such to themward, that had not Gods power been above them, they had been swallowed up and none left, *Psal.*124. but God had all creatures, angels, stars, and all at his beck, *Judg.*5. the stars in their courses fought against *Sisera*, Gods hosts are all for the good of his people; and therefore doth the Apostle *Iames* make use of this his name, *chap.* 5. as if he should say in the behalf of those oppressed ones, it is not because he doth not hear your cry, for *your cry is entred his ears*: neither is it want

of

of power, for he is *Lord of hosts*; therefore it must be for some other end, that you are not set free.

That which *Esaiah* calls a remnant, our Apostle calls *a seed*, because a seed is more Evangelical; and it is the language of this *ch. ver.* 7. 8. so *Gal.*4.16. so that all *Israel are not the seed* first nor last, but the reserved and saved *are the seed*, and they are but a few; ye or *we had been as Sodom, and been made like to Gomorrha*; There had been neither name nor remnant, as in those cities: but may some say, Was there no seed left in *Sodom*, and *Gomorrha?* did not God preserve a seed in sparing *Lot* and his two daughters? I answer.

1. That *Lot* nor his daughters were not saved in these citys, but by an escape to *Zoar*; but these few Jews were spared in the captivity, where the rest were destroyed.

2. Though *Lot* and his two daughters were spared, yet there was not a seed left in a strict sence considered, which was some ground of that incest committed by *Lot* with his two danghters; there were no sons nor men left in the destruction of *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*, only father *Lot*.

That which now remains, is to reduce the whole of these three *verses* thus explicated, into these doctrinal conclusions, which are as followeth.

1. Doct. *Cryeth: That the true servants of God are greatly concerned, and deeply affected at the destruction and ruine of their people for sin and rebellion against God.*

This *crying* supposeth two things; sometimes a deep sence and sorrow for the state and condition of those so *cryed* over; this was the ground of S. *Pauls* sorrow for his brethren the Jews, as we have it in the beginning of this chapter.

2. This

2. This *crying* sometimes supposeth a loud proclamation of the minde of God, that it might be taken notice of; thus *Esaiah chap.* 58. 1. is commanded *to cry and lift up his voyce as a trumpet*: let it be either of these *cryings* in our text, it doth not crosse the doctrine; and that the true servants of God are of this spirit, see *Ier.* 9. 1. and *Lament. of Jeremiah.*

2. D[illegible] *That it is not number, nor covenant-relations to godly ancestors that can secure from Gods wrath and their destruction*: though they are the children of *Israel* they are liable to destruction.

It is not that they were *Israel*, nor that their number were *as the sand on the sea*, that keeps of the stroke, notwithstanding there is but a very small remnant left: it is to be feared that amongst the vast number of professors, and persons in covenant with God by external profession in ordinances, there is but a remnant, a seed that God will own and save, and they are only the righteous: see *Esa.* 3. 10. *say ye to the righteous it shall be well with them*: whereas others let them professe what they will, if workers of iniquity, shall be rejected, *Mat.* 7. *Luke* 13. there are but a few saved, few enters in at the strait gate.

Doctrine. 3. *Gods way in time of common calamity and destruction, is to preserve seed*: a remnant for a stock: so he did in the old world, so in *Sodom*: so in the Wilderness *Caleb* and *Ioshua.*

Ver. 28. Doct. 4. *That God in gospel dayes hath shortned contracted or abbreviated his minde and will, in a short word, in Iesus Christ, and the Gospel.*

The whole duty of man Christ tells us, in two heads; To love God above all, and our neighbour as our selves, and tells us, that on these two, hangs

hangs all the law and the prophets: God saves by a short word.

Doct. 5. *That Gods finishing, consummating, and perfecting his reckoning and account, as to his seed is by faith and no other way;*

All dutys are comprehended in the word of faith, the whole seed of *Abraham* and seed of Christ, are believers in Christ Jesus, *Gal.*3. last.

Doct. 6. *That God in his latter and gospel-dispensation, and his proceedings in destruction and salvation, with Jews and gentiles, doth marvellously magnifie the attribute of his righteousnesse.*

God will ballance a very righteous account, God will consult the honour of his righteousnesse, he will cut it short in righteousnesse; God will save no more then what may well comport with the attribute of his righteousnesse to save.

Ver. 29. Doct. 7. *That God would have his people to know that he is Lord of hosts, captain-general of all creatures in heaven and earth, and they are in a millitary and battle-aray at his service for the good of his remnant.*

This the Apostle *James* would have the oppressed saints take notice of, *James* 5. *Heb.* 1. *last* the angels are all *ministring spirits, for those who are heirs of salvation.*

8. Doct. *That when God delivers his people into the hands of his and their enemies for sin, if they be not totally destroyed and swallowed up alive, their preservation must be appropriated to the gratious interposer, the Lord of hosts.*

If a remnant be left it is not the effect of the mercy of the enemy, but the power and grace of God; the enemy would not be satisfied as long as one is alive, if God did not interpose: take two words from hence. Acknowledge

1. Acknowledge God in all thy preſervations, in the midſt of his and your enemyes; ſay (as the Pſalmiſt) *Pſal.* 124. *if God had not been on our ſide at this and that time, we had been ſwallowed up quick.*

2. If *Jehovah* of hoſts be on thy ſide, be not afraid what men can do unto thee: ſay as *David*, *Pſal.* 46. *God is my refuge I will not fear though the earth be removed*: So much for *ver.* 27. 28. 29. an end of the ſecond head.

CHAP. XVIII.

Explaining the cauſes why the Jews miſſed and the Gentiles obtained the righteouſneſſe which is according to faith.

Ver. 30. *What ſhall we ſay then? that the gentiles which followed not after righteouſneſſe, have attained to righteouſneſſe, even the righteouſneſſe which is of faith.*

31. *But* Iſrael *which followed after the law of righteouſneſſe, hath not attained to the law of righteouſneſſe.*

WE now proceed to the third head propounded to be handled in order to a brief concluſion of this chapter, which contains the preſent ſtate of the Jews and gentiles: we have the Apoſtle in theſe 2. verſes drawing up his reſult as the ſum and ſubſtance of what he had been treating about in this chapter, as to the right way and means appointed by God, in order to juſtification and ſalvation, only by faith: this particle (*then*), *what ſhall we ſay then?* doth undeniably ſerve to demonſtrate,

ſtrate, that theſe words are relative to the former matter in this chapter; and if you would be ſatisfied what has been the Apoſtles precedent theme in this Chapter, you may reade it in this collection: it is the judgment of thoſe who would believe, that the Apoſtles theme in this chapter was about perſonal election and reprobation; that this reſult is only drawn up from the two laſt teſtimonies out of *Hoſea* and *Eſaiah*, which he had been treating upon: others who are clear in their judgments of the contrary, takes them to be the reſult of what he had ſpoken unto in the whole precedent part of the chapter and Epiſtle; and there is ſome good reaſon to be given, that theſe words are the reſult of the whole rather then of what he had been ſpeaking of from the prophets; it being plain, that theſe prophecies ſpake nothing of juſtification which notwithſtanding is the Apoſtles great doctrine in this chapter and Epiſtle: our adverſaries being our judges; they agree, that the great controverſie of the Apoſtle with the Jews, was about the way or law of juſtification, whether by the works of the law or faith in Chriſt; this is plain, if any ſhould deny it, *cha.*3. *cha.*4. *cha.*10. of *Romans*: now if this was the controverſie I appeal to all unbiaſt ſouls, if this concluſion be not very proper to fall in place here.

But ſome may ſay, how doth it follow from the main body of this chapter, that either the gentiles not following do attain, or the Jews following doth not attain to righteouſneſs. I anſwer that both theſe concluſions are in the bowels of the doctrine *of juſtification by faith, without the works of the law*: as for inſtance,

1. The gentiles who did believe were juſtified, though

though they did not obſerve the Moſaical diſpenſation. 2. It is as plain, that the Jews who did purſue will and run, in this diſpenſation, yet were not juſtified, but rejected by God, both theſe are carried along in this Epiſtle and chapter: theſe verſes cannot be the reſult of any other doctrine but that of juſtification, much leſs can it be properly the reſult of that doctrin of perſonal election or reprobation: thoſe who are willing to ſee the truth, may ſee as clearly as they may ſee the ſun ſhine at noonday, that this concluſion cannot be drawn from ſuch premiſſes, but may on the contrary draw from them an impregnable argument, that the Apoſtle had not been concerned about any ſuch doctrine of election, but ſomething elſe: but ſoraſmuch as I muſt be brief according to promiſe in the concluſion of this chapter, I ſhall come to the words as they lie, *what ſhall we ſay then?* this kinde of interrogatory ſpeaking is common with this Apoſtle on ſeveral other places, as I have before ſpoken, *ver.* 14. this kinde of ſpeaking doth caſt a kinde of reflection back upon what he had been ſpeaking, as it doth in other places, *chap.* 6. 1. *cha.* 8. 28. and other places: that the whole world, is divided into Jews and gentiles: by gentiles here muſt be underſtood all the whole uncircumciſed world, except ſuch as were proſelited to the Jews religion, that followed not after righteouſneſs, that did not ſtear a courſe that way: but we are to know, that in this kinde of ſpeaking there is more to be underſtood then is expreſt: ſpoken or expreſt, it is not only to be underſtood in a negative ſence, that they were not juſt or righteous men, or that they did not purſue or minde righteouſneſſe; or that they could not be charged

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with unrighteousnesse, but affirmatively and positively, they walked according to the course of this world; in a positive sence they lived in all wickednesse and all abomination, *Ephes.* 2. *they were abominable, and to every good work reprobate*: for this adverb of *denying*, hath more in it then what is spoken and expresst; as I might shew you in several instances, 1 *Cor.* 10. 5. *with many of them God was not well-pleased*, that is, he was greatly displeased and angry, *Heb.* 10. 38. *if any draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in them* (that is,) I shall abhor them: so here, they followed not righteousnesse, that is, they were very far from righteousnesse, they had nothing to pleade as to acceptance; and by this kinde of speaking concerning the gentiles the Apostle doth anticipate the Jews, from making this an argument, that the gentiles could not be gods people, from the consideration of their sinfulnesse; therefore S. *Paul* puts this in the front; *they followed not after righteousnesse*; *they attained*: the word signifieth to overtake, lay hold on righteousnesse, because that this righteousnesse came in by believing, not by working; for these gentiles when righteousnesse and justification came to be preached to them by the gospel, soon laid hold upon, and embraced those doctrines; the gentiles *received the word with joy*, *Act.* 8. and that upon Gods own terms, as a hungry man falls to his food: the gentiles had no righteousnes of their own to relieve them, as the Jews had, therfore they accepted of the righteousnesse of faith: gospel-righteousnes is called the *righteousnesse of faith*, because men upon believing are declared righteous; as it was with *Abraham*, *he believed God*; *and it was accounted to him for righteousnesse*; as if

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the Apostle should say to the Jews, I mean not such a righteousnesse as you speak of or dream of, which consists in the observation of the law; but such a righteousnesse as is according to Gods free grace, and imputatively by believing, according to *chap.* 4.8. *blessed is the man to whom God will not impute sin:* the blessednesse is not, that he hath no sin, but that it is not imputed. Now when the Apostle here saith, *that the gentiles who followed not after righteousnesse, have attained to it:* he must not be understood, to suppose or imply, in so saying, that this faith was given them whilst they slept, or that they attained without the exercise of their inward abilityes; or that they were under an unavoidable necessity by any decree to that purpose: but all that may be supposed to be intended in this kinde of speaking of the Apostle, may be reduced to these three particulars, that when it was said, *they followed not yet attained.*

1. That God did graciously overlook or wink at their former ignorance, & notwithstanding all their former idolatry and prophanesse did send the gospel & the offers of grace & reconciliation amongst them, when they did not think of it, or seek after it.

2. That these gentiles falling in with the gospel in the gracious invitations and tenders of it, upon Gods terms, and did actually believe, they are accepted; and in respect to these two circumstances, it was propheſyed, *Esa.* 65.1. and quoted *Rom.* 10. *God is found of them that sought him not, and was made manifest to them that asked not after him.*

3. These gentiles thus receiving and believing the gospel, *God keepeth covenant and mercy,* and so *justifieth and saveth them*: thus it is to be understood, that *those that sought not; yet attained,* not

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can it be underſtood otherways, notwithſtanding what hath been ſaid; but that thoſe who do unfeignedly ſeek after God are in the moſt likely way to finde him, for the promiſes run directly & properly to ſuch, 1 *Chro.*28.9. *Pr.*8.17. *Eſ.*55. and where is any promiſe made to thoſe that do not ſeek.

2. Let not any of us think, that ſuch kinde of ſpeaking as this, doth prove that perſons living under the ſound of the goſpel from day to day, and neglecting obedience thereunto, are not farther from attaining every day then other.

3. Neither doth this kinde of ſpeaking, prove, that God will be ſavingly found of any perſons at any time, but when his heart is ingaged in the uſe of thoſe means wherein he is to be found: now when the text ſaith, *he was found of them that ſought him not*, It muſt be underſtood, that God was moving towards them, before they were moving towards him; and hereupon they are drawn to ſeek God that never ſought him before.

CHAP. XIX.

Plainly demonſtrating that perſons juſtified and ſaved in Goſpel-days, ſhall have no cauſe to boaſt, but on the contrary to attribute all to free-grace.

Ver.31. *But* Iſrael *that followed after righteouſneſs.*

Iſrael, or the Iſraelites are two ways underſtood in Scriptures, ſometimes upon a ſpiritual, ſometimes upon a fleſhly account, ſometimes by *Iſrael* is meant thoſe who reſemble *Iſrael* in faith and holyneſſe; in this ſence are they to be underſtood *ver.* 6. *all are not Iſrael* in this ſence, *Nathanael* is *an Iſ-*

raelite, *John* 1. and upon this *Israel* doth our Apostle wish *mercy and peace*, Gal. 6.

But 2ly, And most commonly, *Israel* is taken in a larger sence for the whole posterity of *Jacob*, who was by God sirnamed *Israel*, his posterity according to the flesh are called *Israel*, as distinct from those that did believe: they are here to be understood the body of the rebellious Jews: who were enemies to Christ, yet these are said to *follow after the law of righteousnesse*: these did eagerly pursue the law of righteousnesse, or the righteousnesse of the law: some *by the law of righteousnesse*, do understand righteousnesse it self, and so the same Apostle is understood, *chap.* 7. that the law of the minde was the minde it self; but others understand, that in this place is intended the rule, method, or way of righteousnesse, the way propounded in order to claiming it; the Jews followed a law which they thought would have led to justification, being of Gods own giving forth: the Jews did conceive, and therein they were right, that God had appointed some law or other for the justification of the world, and without the obedience whereof they could not be justified.

2ly, They thought this law or rule was that given on *Mount Sinai*, in the external part of it, and therefore they followed that law for it, but they miscarried, and did not attain to the *law of righteousnesse*, that is, they never came to understand and see, and so not to pursue the right law wherein righteousnesse was to be had, called *Rom.* 3. 27. *the law of faith*: so that here was the case, though the Jews contended, might and main, about the observation of a law, which they imagined would have justified, yet they came not near unto

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the true law: they did not take hold of that *right law of righteousnesse*; nay, which is yet more plainer, the Jews did not attain to the righteousnesse of that law which they followed: for whilst they observed some part of the law in the letter of it, they were short in the spirit of it, and inside of it: as our Lord tells them *Mat.* 5. and besides they sought justification in a wrong way, which God did never intend for that end: and being in a wrong way, the further and faster they run, the worse. So much for explication, I shall only name those doctrines which doth offer themselves to our considerations, from the words thus opened, which are as followeth, *what shall we say then?*

1. Doctrine, *That it is a matter of great concernment for persons rightly to understand the right way and proper terms of justification.*

The Apostle having been arguing till he is weary, knows not what more to say, yet he is not willing to leave a matter of such great import; I know not what to say more, yet I will give you the result of the whole which I have already said.

2. Doctrine, *That God hath made provision for present grace and future glory for gentiles indefinitely.*

3. Doctrine, *That God affords a people a very choice favour, when he sends the gospel amongst them.*

By this it was, that the gentiles came to attain righteousnes, the gospel coming into a house or city, and salvation coming, is all one, and is taken one for another, *Luke* 19.

4. Doctrine, *That God hath prepared and made ready the gospel dispensation for sinners.*

Such as are far from righteousnes; these were the persons which S. *Paul* took notice of in his day.

to attain to righteousnes: in Christs time publicans and harlots embraced the gospel before scribes and Pharisees.

5. Doctrine, *That persons justified and saved in gospel-dayes shall have no cause to boast, but to attribute all to free grace: Rom* 3. 27. boasting is excluded by the free-law of justification, *Ephes.* 2. *not of works lest any should boast.*

6. Doctrine, *That the gospel is most readily and most sweetly embraced of the poor.*

Poor dispisable gentiles first laid hold of it, and the terms of it, the gentiles were glad of the gospel, *Acts.* 13. *chap.* 8. *they rejoyced with great joy*, the gentiles by pursuing, overtook and laid hold.

7. Doctrine, *Faith is the true and ready way appointed by God to attain justification and acceptance with God.*

The righteousnes of faith is the only righteousnes in Gods account, *Abraham believed God and it was accounted for righteousnes, and he was called the friend of God.*

8. Doctrine, *But Israel*, Doct. *A people in covenant with God: yet not tractably following God are the worst of people.*

The gentiles though strangers to God, yet following God tractably in his gospel-dispensation; are preferred above *Israel*: *Israel* is named by a term of diminution, from this adversative *but*; *but Israel*: the first are left upon this account by God.

9. Doctrine, *It is possible for persons to be zealous in a wrong way, to a good end.* They aimed at righteousnes and acceptance with God, *Rom.* 10. 2. *they had a zeal*, but in a wrong way: *Paul* was zealous in his persecution, *Phil.* 3. 6. *Gal.* 1. 4. the goodness of our end will not excuse the badness of our way.

10. Doct.

10. Doctrine, *Israel ſuffered a total diſappointment in thoſe things they expected, though they painfully purſued hard after them.*

They expected ſingular acceptance with God, and in the room thereof met with rejection, they expected juſtification but they miſt it, and loſt their labour.

CHAP. XX.

Calling for greateſt circumſpection, becauſe perſons in a very fair and likely way unto ſalvation in their own thoughts may ſuffer diſappointment, it is very eaſie to ſtumble at Chriſt and his ways if careful heed be not taken.

Verr. 32. *Wherefore? becauſe they ſought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law, for they ſtumbled at that ſtumbling-ſtone.*

33. *As it is written, behold I lay in* Sion *a ſtumbling-ſtone and rock of offence, and whoſoever believeth ſhall not be aſhamed.*

IN which two verſes we have contained the fourth and laſt head, which head contains the more ſpecial and more ſingular and particular cauſe of their coming ſhort of juſtification, which we have under two circumſtances.

1. *They ſought it as it were by the works of the law.*

2. *They ſtumbled at Jeſus Chriſt:* the Apoſtle draws this 33. *verſe* out of ſome paſſages in the propheſy of *Eſaiah chap.* 8. 14. *chap.* 28. 16. and as the Apoſtle in other places and caſes doth ſupply the Old Teſtament imperfections, ſo here alſo, he doth make theſe places more clear by evangelical

light: we have three amendments in these verses.

1. He expoundeth the prophets indefinitely, *he that believeth* by a universal, *whosoever believeth*, or *every one believing*, which is more clearly in gospel-language expreſt, *John* 6. 47. *Mark.* 16. 16. *John.* 3. 16.

2. Whereas the Prophet expreſt himself only thus, *he that believeth not*, expreſſing the person or thing to be believed on, our Apoſtle in his citation of the words mendeth them, and saith *on him*.

1. Signifying that it is a person who is to be believed on.

2. That this person is he that is compared to a ſtumbling-ſtone.

3. Our Apoſtle expreſſeth the *prophets will not make haſte* by *will not be aſhamed*: but to the words more closely, which in these verſes contain a double reaſon more particularly of the ſucceſleſneſs of the Jews endeavours after juſtification; that they did not attain though they followed after: we have here a rational account in ſight not ſuppoſed but expreſt.

1. *They ſought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law.*

2. They *ſtumbled* at ſomething that lay in their way, *they ſtumbled at that ſtumbling ſtone*; as the Apoſtle begins this chapter with cordiall grief and ſorrow for his contreymens diſappointment, ſo he concludes the chapter with a rational account, how this came to paſs; this their ſad eſtate was founded in their unbelief, and their unbelief was founded in their being offended, and ſo ſtumbling at Chriſt as to his mean and low poſition; he lay ſo low that they ſtumbled at him: the Apoſtle by this kinde of concluſion, doth further amplify what the ſubject

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was upon which he had been treating in this chapter; the Apoſtle being to render a true reaſon of their diſappointment, doth not in the leaſt ſuggeſt, much leſs aſſert in terms, that this their preſent ſad eſtate was the effect of an eternal decree of reprobation, upon a meer perſonal account, without reſpect to their works, which had been very proper, if that had been his theam in this chapter, but it is plain and clear and above-board in this concluſion; and that it might be ſatisfactory, he gives it negatively and affirmatively, not becauſe they were not elected are they not juſtified, but *becauſe they ſought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law.*

I ſhall enquire into the words as they lie by a brief explication of them.

1. Our apoſtle in this introduction ſuppoſeth *ſome body*, from what he had ſaid lately to the Jews, as to their not attaining, asking a queſtion to this effect, why or wherefore did they not attain? this is ſuppoſed from this *wherefore* in the beginning; now the anſwer to this queſtion, both negatively & affirmatively, takes up the whole of theſe two verſes; theſe words *they ſought it*, are not in the Original, but are a ſupplement from the former verſe; yet they are a neceſſary ſupply to accommodate the ſence and make it more clear, theſe words are alſo left out in the *Vulgar Latin*: but why doth the Apoſtle add theſe words, (*as it were*)? this kinde of ſpeaking ſuppoſeth ſome kinde of reſemblance, though not the ſame thing, as the ſame kinde of ſpeaking is underſtood, *Cant.* 6. 12. *as it were the company of two armies*, that is, it did ſeem like or bear ſome reſemblance to ſuch an appearance: ſo *Luke*. 22. 44. our Lord it is ſaid, *ſweat as it were*

drops of blood, in appearance it seemed so, but there was water with it: so 1 *Cor.* 4. 9. 2 *Cor.* 11. Some think the Apostle speaks this to impeach the Jews, as to their imperfections in their observations of their own law, and that they did not really and compleatly do those works which that law required, there was but some resemblance of their doing them: their works being works of the devil which they pretended were according to Gods law, *John.* 8. and so in a strict sence very far from the works of the law: others think, he thus speaks to discover the mistake in general of those who think in the least to obtain justification by the observation of the law, if strictly observed, for at the best it was but as it were a way of justification, and not the real way; for faith even in *Abrahams* time was the way of justification: but if a second Question should be asked the Apostle, how comes it to passe that the Jews were so averse to believing in Christ? for it we have a second answer, in the latter part of these 32. and 33. verses, *they stumbled at the stumbling stone*, or as in the original, *at the stone of the stumbling*; these two are rendred both with an Emphasis, *the stone*, *the stumbling*: they are both remarkable: by this *stone* is understood Christ; I need not stand to prove, that he is said to be a tryed stone, a precious corner stone: now that this *stone* should be an occasion of *stumbling* is strange: this *stone* was the most excellent of all stones, and this *stumbling* the most significant and most dangerous of all stumblings: of this *stone* and of this *stumbling* our Lord Christ speaks, *Mat.* 21. 44. *they that fall by stumbling at this stone, shall be broken: those it falls upon, it shall grinde them to powder*: he that is so offended, and stumbles, so as not first nor last to

to believe in Christ shall utterly be undone and ruined, there can be no healing that wound: there was a fivefold ground of offence by the Jews taken up against Christ,

1. At the meanness of his parentage, that *Joseph* who was a Carpenter was his Father; they would have had him the son of a prince.

2. They were offended at the meanness of Christs person, he did not appear in pomp and glory, as they expected, and as he shall appear the second time: his garb was then mean and despisable.

3. At the meanness and lowness of his education, he was not brought up in humane learning, arts or sciences, which occasioned this question of the Jews, *John.* 7. 15. *how knoweth this man letters, having never learned?*

4. At the meanness of his followers, Christs disciples and companions were but mean fishermen, and such like: the rulers were not his followers, but silly people in the worlds account.

5. They were offended at the plainness and severity of his doctrine, he was bold in reproving sin, especially the sin of hypocricy, which they were so deeply guilty of: and this he did without respect of persons: now the reason why a man stumbles at a stone, stick, or block in his way, is not always for want of light; men may stumble at noon-day if they take not heed to their feet, if there be not a careful circumspect observation: the Jews *stumbling*, was not for want of light, but diligent heeding their own prophets, which prophecyed of Christ in that way he came, as *Isa.* 53. and others of them: *stumbling* doth sometimes arise from the thing it self, & that from a twofold reason.

1. Sometimes

1. Sometimes because it is laid so low, on the earth; the Jews did stumble at Christ, by reason of his low position and placing; he was in a low condition, he was poor and mean; the meanness and humillity of Christ put the Eunuch to a losse; he wanted some body to guide him, *Act.* 8. after this sence *Iob* is to be understood, *Iob.* 27. 2. he complains, *that God had taken away his judgement*, that is, that men could not judge him but to be an hypocrite, so the Jews judged that Christ was smitten of God in his humilliation: so that the low position of this *stone* is one reason of their *stumbling*.

2. It is not only placed low on the earth, but in the very way and path, even amongst them, where they go; it was laid and pitcht in *Zion*, which doth not always intend the literal place, the *strong hold of Zion*, but it is often spoken as to Gods people, they are often called *Zion*, as *Psal.*69. *Esa.*49. this made the Jews to undervalue Christ because he was laid amongst them, they knew him and his original, and that this did heighten their offence see *Mat.* 13. 55. 56. *John.*6. 42. *ch.* 7. 27. and this *stumbling* in this metaphor implyes the dashing the foot against something hard and resistive, whereby he receives much harm, is bruised and broke, and not only so, but it occasions a stop in their proceedings in that journy, they can go no further, by reason thereof, they stumbled so at Christ as to cavil and quarrel at him, as not being the true *Messiah*, when indeed he was, and were malicious and hateful to him, and so rejected him, and were rejected by him.

But some may say, may not God be concerned in this stumbling of the Jews? doth not our text say, that

that the *Lord God laid this ſtone there*, even *in Zion*, and that *as a ſtumbling-ſtone and rock of offence*? and doth not S. *Peter* ſpeak to the ſame purpoſe 1 *Peter*, 2.8. *They ſtumbled at the word, being diſobedient, whereunto they were appointed*: from which text ſome gather a neceſſity for the Jews, to ſtumble, diſobey, and reject Chriſt? to which I anſwer, that ſuch a conſtruction were not only repugnant to the current of Scriptures but a great impeachment of Gods juſtice and holineſſe, to make him the author of ſin and diſobedience, ſo contrary to his nature, and abhorred by him: ſome interpreters mends this conſtruction by turning this word *appointed* to the word *diſpoſed*, with an eye to themſelves not God: Dr. *Hammond* reads the words thus, *that thoſe that are diſobedient to the goſpel and ſtand obſtinately againſt Chriſt, are thoſe who are by God appointed and declared, to ſo ſtumble as to be ruined, by this their obſtinacy*: ſo that inſtead of Gods appointing the ſin according to this conſtruction, he appoints the puniſhment of the ſin; for diſobedience to the goſpel, is not to be imputed to the God of heaven, but the God of this world: as 2 *Cor.* 4. *the God of this world blindes the mindes of thoſe that believe not*: our Lord Jeſus gives this as the reaſon why they did not believe, *becauſe they receive honour one of another*: but that God lays this ſtumbling-block in the Jews way, according to our text, is plain, but for a far better end in God, then for them to ſtumble at: their ſtumbling was accidental from the evil of their own hearts, as the dunghil ſtinks becauſe the ſun ſhines upon it; Chriſt is not antecedently or intentially a ſtumbling-ſtone, but accidentally and eventially, as Chriſt alſo ſaith, *he came to make diviſion*

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not peace, and to set the daughter against the mother: so Christ is said, *Luke* 2. 34. *to be set for the fall and rising of many in Israel*; their fall accidentally, their rising intentially; they stumble at Christ out of stubbornes and wilfulnes, not for want of light; this *Calvin* himself grants. It is added here in the conclusion, *shall not be ashamed* or *confounded*: I before told you, that in these adverbs of deniall, the contrary is intended: that is, *he shall be bold*, and *shall glory*; the reward of believers being not only privative but positive; they shall not only be delivered from shame but greatly glorified, *Pro.* 3. *last*, these two are opposed one to the other, *the wise shall inherit glory, but shame shall be the promotion of fools.*

I shall now only sum up what doctrinal conclusions these two verses thus opened doth afford us, and so close the whole chapter: I shall lay down ten doctrines.

1. From the question *wherefore.*

1. Doct. *That the notorious successlesnes and palpable disappointment to the Jews in their pursuing after righteousnes, admits of a question, wherefore, or why it is so?*

Here is a reason above-board, God is ready and his servants ought to be ready, to render a reason of Gods severity to sinners.

2. Doct. *Persons in a very fair and likely way to salvation in their own thoughts, may suffer disappointment.*

3. Doct. *The true reason of the Jews rejection and non-justification, was founded in their not believing in Jesus Christ*: this is the positive reason, and not their reprobation from eternity; *if you believe not in me, you shall die in your sins*, saith Christ.

4. Doct.

4. Doct. (*As it were*) *The Jews were very imperfect in the law by which they expected to be justified: their obedience was but like, not the same.*

5. Doct. *God hath in much wisdom and counsel so ordained and appointed the state and station of Jesus Christ as to his humiliation, that if persons be not very considerate and circumspect about it, they may easily stumble at him (being so laid) to their utter ruine and destruction.*

The case stands so with Christ and his ways, that if we would be kept from stumbling, we must look narrowly into them: it is easie to stumble at Christ and his ways, if not carefully heeded.

6. Doct. (*As it is written*) *S. Paul in his preachings and writings had a special eye upon the Scriptures before-written.*

This language is frequent with the Apostle, who have him a matter of thirty times in his Epistles appealing to what is written, and sixteen times of them in this Epistle; the Apostle had a high valuation of what was written in the Scriptures of the prophets.

7. Doct. (Behold,) *That the position, setting or placing of Christ by God, as to his humiliation, is a very remarkable passage;*

It wants a *behold* to awaken persons to take notice of it and consider it before Christ came in the flesh: see how careful the spirit of God is to foretell Christs humility before he came, especially this prophet *Isaiah*, from whence this place is fetcht.

8. Doct. *The Jews offence against Christ was heightened by his being founded and laid amongst themselves.*

9. Doct. (*A rock of offence:*) *The same Jesus Christ which is a rock of defence to believers, is a rock*

of

of offence to unbelievers: Believers make use of this in Christ for their encouragement which unbelievers apply for their ruine.

10. Doct. *Faith in Jesus Christ doth beget patience and stabillity in waiting for glory and exaltation*: *Isaiah* saith, *they made not haste*, that is, those who fear no disappointment: the Apostle turns it, *not ashamed, shall not have cause of shame*: they shall not be disappointed, they shall not be confounded shaken or shattered: Faith in Christ doth fix the heart.

Thus have I very briefly offered my judgement concerning the Apostles scope in this chapter; and my desire is that what I have offered may be carefully examined, without prejudice and offence, and my desire also is; that the Lord may help your understandings to understand the Scriptures, *Amen*.

FINIS.